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Grass Roots

Craft and self-sufficiency

For down to earth people

No. 77.
FEBRUARY 1990

- Pekin Ducks
- Restoring Old Furniture
- Termite Control
- Growing Pawpaws
- Kit Homes
- Fruit Liqueurs





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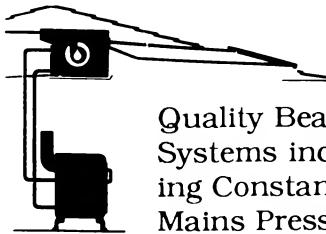
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POULTRY BREEDERS DIRECTORY



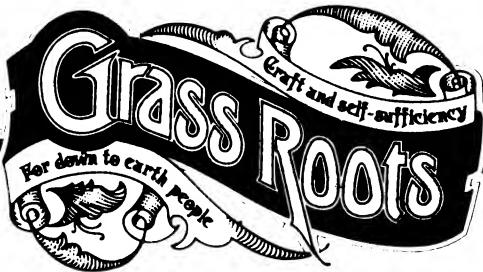
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POULTRY BREEDERS DIRECTORY

The directory describes the pure breeds currently being kept in Australia and lists the breeders who keep them. It mentions breeds that are popular and those that are rare or at risk from lack of support. Whether your interest be in turkeys, fowl, ducks, geese, peafowl, pheasants or guinea fowl, this book is a must.

* The Poultry Breeders Directory costs \$5.00 and is available from: Night Owl Publishers
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Front Cover: Darren Birch and Stuart Telford of Euroa with their favourite Pekin ducks. Stuart's parents keep a range of ducks for eggs and meat and find the Pekin an excellent all rounder. See page 59 for our article on keeping Pekin ducks.

Back Cover: This fairytale cottage belongs to Barry Newton of Sunrise Farm, Buchan, Vic and was constructed from mudbrick with a bark roof. Sunrise Farm works in harmony with Ontos Retreat, which we featured last issue, and runs sheep, goats, horses, agisted cattle plus a menagerie of poultry. Read about Sunrise Farm on page 29.

Distributed by Gordon and Gotch.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Friends,

After years and years of reading this wonderful magazine I have finally decided to make a contribution, meagre though it may seem. Firstly, I would like to express my concern and sympathy for those individuals (and couples) who tend to look towards 'the self-sufficient lifestyle' through rose-coloured glasses. Not only is SELF-SUFFICIENCY not rose-coloured, it's not even easy. It is only when you look back over the years that you can appreciate what you have done. The doing is blisters. Secondly, I would like to set a few people straight. What prompted me to do this was the remark from a young couple (early 20's) who, after bemoaning their plight of failing on their first attempt to become 'self-sufficient' turned around and said to me 'But you couldn't possibly understand what it must be like for us'.

My 'not understanding' started when I was about 22. No. 1 hubby, brand new son and I were living in a lovely older style house on just over 1/4 acre in an outer Sydney suburb. So cheesed off were we with our then lifestyle that we decided to do something about it. So we grew vegies - organically, of course - raised chooks, bred rabbits (but don't let the council know we did that), grew herbs, had a milking goat (keep mum on that one, too) and more. After a while we realised that our project was starting to run away from us, so we then invested in approximately thirty acres at Mudgee. Oh, what bliss, but oh, what costs! So I took on a second job, hubby worked longer hours, and the baby-sitter didn't mind the extra income. We went to our 'farm' as often as possible, usually every second weekend, to play farmers. We built a cabin, bought a few calves, were given a few sheep, dug some dams, planted fruit trees, grew herbs, gave the vegies a miss, put in water tanks, made good friends, decided we would 'make the move', and got divorced.

Then along came partner No. 2. We made plans to buy land in a more tropical area, did the research, organised the builders, made the move, acquired the livestock, grew the vegies, and were just starting

to see the end of the first year 'on the farm' when he died in a road accident. So dream No. 2 was sold to meet the debts and son and I decided to have a long, hard look at ourselves, our futures, this 'self-sufficiency' thing and just sit and wait. For what, we didn't know, but it seemed safer.

After a while I had settled nicely into happily accepting being on my own forever, but the gods had decreed otherwise. Partner No. 3 wandered into our lives with quiet dreams of being on a 'bit of land', growing enough fruit and vegies for our needs, maybe having a pig or two, and then eventually maybe a cow or something ..etc..etc. Well, in the seven years we have been together we have tried to buy a small crop farm, but floods wiped it out. Die-back was found in the pawpaw farm we put a deposit on. Just in the nick of time we discovered that the books had been 'cooked' in the wholesale nursery we were in the throes of purchasing. And still we are optimistic. We have decided to wait for another year before we look again. We are only 34. I'm not too sure if I would be classed as being optimistic, gullible or insane, but before you utter 'but you couldn't possibly understand', just remember this - I DO!

Ada
QUEENSLAND.

Dear Grass Roots,

Does anyone know where I can get hold of a HAND POWERED CLOTHES WRINGER, either an oldie still in working order or a newie? To my surprise, enquiries I've made around Melbourne have drawn a blank. Having just torn the ligament of a little finger while hand-wringing the clothes, I think it's time to take a small step up the technological ladder! Peace.

Peter Laffan
16 Westbourne Grove
NORTHCOTE 3070.

Dear Grass Roots,

Recently my family and I have made the big move to the country. I have lived in the city all my life, so this is a big step for me. I believe it is important to provide my children with a healthier lifestyle, and this is just not possible in Melbourne.

We have a 1 acre block and the plan is to grow our own fruit and vegetables. My father had a large vegetable garden as I was growing up which I really appreciated. Supermarket vegetables are absolutely disgusting. They look and taste like plastic. What I am a bit hesitant about is RAISING CHICKENS. We would like to have fresh eggs but I know nothing about chickens. I would appreciate any information in regards to this project e.g. what sort of shelter to build? What sort of chickens to buy?

I am also after any information about KEEPING SHEEP. The idea is to keep the grass on our block at a manageable level. What else apart from grass do sheep need to eat? How do they get along with dogs?

Can anyone give me some advice on CLEANING SLATE floors. I have been led to believe that soap based products leave a dull finish. Also, does anyone have a recipe for LILLY PILLY JAM?

If anyone wants advice on good CHILDREN'S LITERATURE just drop me a line. I used to work in a small children's bookstore for many years. I believe that it is important to expand their horizons by encouraging our children to read. When writing to me please state, your child's age, sex, reading ability and their interests. I will be more than happy to suggest a suitable book.

Finally, thanks to *Grass Roots* for an interesting and informative publication.

Mary Fleming
PO Box 269
KORUMBURRA 3950.

Dear GR Readers,

Has anyone information on how to construct a COOLGARDIE SAFE? The type I am interested in has a sheetmetal tray on the top which holds water and the sides are made from hessian or similar fabric. Thanks for a great magazine.

Jean Swan
1 Shadwell Street
CHELTENHAM 3192.



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Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear GR,

Our escape from suburbia happened about 12 months ago. We have since been busily building our house, building dams, developing pasture, etc, on our 28 acres. It is amazing that when we started looking for land 28 acres sounded so much. Now it seems to get smaller all the time – it certainly doesn't take long to get used to having space around and we would love to have more. Sometimes after spending time back in the city we can just about feel our bodies relax and breathe a sign of relief as we reach the valley of bush and open fields that leads to our place. I felt terrible when we cleared a large area of our bush but we had, after all, bought acres partly so my husband Mark could eventually do commercial growing – probably flowers or herbs.

We never really planned to be living in our shed for this long but it has been an 'experience'. I must confess to longing for the self-indulgent luxury of being able to sit on a toilet that flushes at any hour of the day or night without even having to go outside. We do enjoy the fireplace that Mark made. It is similar to the fire-drums advertised but cost virtually nothing using second-hand materials, and for about \$20 worth of copper tubing he rigged up a system to heat our bath water.

To our menagerie of cats and dogs we have added the first of our farm animals – our goat Chelsea. She is quite a character and as intelligent and mischievous as any dog. A couple of times I have woken up in bed to find a bearded face looking at me after she has sneaked into the shed. She is expecting kids very soon and I would appreciate it if anyone has any advice or could recommend a good book on REARING GOAT KIDS. We would like to be able to milk Chelsea and plan to keep at least one kid as company for her.

Good luck to all of you planning for your escape to a GR lifestyle, and to those of you that have made the change and are finding it hard going – just try to, as we do, stop for a while and enjoy and be thankful for what you do have.

Veda Connor
'Koompartoo'
RMB 12 Cottesloe Rd
JILLIBY 2259.

Dear Megg and David,

Here's some thoughts for CHRONIC HEADACHE sufferers. I have suffered from headaches for the past 30 years. They increased in severity and 12 months ago were finally diagnosed as migraines. Visits to doctors and specialists only brought offers of strong painkilling medication (which only took the headaches away sometimes and left me feeling awful) and 'Indurel' which didn't work. Anyway a friend lent me a book which said you should stop and listen to your body. I can't remember the name of the book. Anyway I sat and had a long think about the whole situation and decided that since all the painkillers had caffeine in them and they made me feel awful, caffeine was the problem. I had stopped drinking coffee about 5 years ago but was still drinking lots of tea every day. So I stopped drinking tea and so far haven't had a headache for two months. It's such a relief so thought I'd pass the good word on as you don't seem to get much help from doctors.

Also a note to lady readers – don't forget to have regular 'pap' smears.

Liz Rosenberg
PO Box 135
BROOME 6725.

Dear Friend,

This letter is just a short note to let you know what has been happening with the BUNDABERG ORGANIC GROWERS, 1988 was a successful year for us. At the moment we have approx. 40 households with memberships. Generally each meeting has seen from five to twenty people attend. Most members live long distances from town and do not make it to each meeting. We are now an incorporated body and enjoy the peace of mind that goes with it.

In the last 12 months or so we have had field trips to members' properties, breadmaking demonstrations at meetings, stalls at various local happenings, video presentations and visits by various speakers, the highlight being a talk given by Myrtle Charteris and Ted Forbes of the Brisbane Organic Growers. Some organic produce agents from

the southern states visited the area earlier in the year trying to stimulate growers to supply southern winter markets. As a result some members of our group are now seeking NASAA standards for their properties.

A newsletter was started in 1988, practically all of the work getting it together and publishing it being done by our chairperson Mavis Rudd. Mavis also arranged outlets for the sale of the newsletter at local produce stalls, herb farms and health food stores. The sale of these newsletters helped generate much needed funds, as well as attracting many new members. Anyone interested is welcome to come to one of our monthly meetings – last Thursday of each month, 7.30 pm at the CWA Hall, Quay St, Bundaberg.

Bundaberg Organic Growers Inc

C/- The Healthy Lifestyle
Shop 2, Earls Crt
176 Bourbong St
BUNDABERG 4670.
Ph: 071-524-437.

Dear GR Readers,

I'm writing this letter not just for myself but for the thousands of people who suffer from HSV 2 (herpes). I am 40ish and have had the disease for just 1 year and am going crosseyed reading up on it. I wondered if any of the thousands with this complaint would care to write and share information with me on any type of helpful hints on management. As you all know conventional medicine doesn't have our answers yet. As a suggestion I felt we could maybe even form some sort of communication by letters network, does anyone have any ideas? I'm open to suggestion. Please no goody goodies need bother to write and tell us people of our morals or otherwise. To the world in general I'd just like to say that we are very normal people whose needs are the same as everyone else's and whose feelings are just as fragile. HSV people let's see if we can't help each other – I am willing to try are you? Self help groups can you contact me as there are none in my area.

Mary Woodleigh

C/- PO
TANNUM SANDS 4680.

Dear GR Readers,

We have just moved across to Western Australia from Victoria due to my husband's job transfer, so far, we love it here! However, we don't know anybody and would like to get to know any fellow GR readers ANYWHERE IN WA. Since moving from Victoria I regretfully had to sell my horse and now find how expensive it is to own and look after a horse here – mostly due to the harsh, dry conditions throughout the summer.

At this stage we are currently buying our first home and to buy a horse is virtually out of the question, for a good while at least! However, if there is anybody (pref. Armadale/Hills or surrounds) that HAS A HORSE, but not the time to ride, I'd be happy to ride it for them. I am an average/capable rider with ARC experience and would prefer an older horse, that is quiet and easy to handle, just for pleasure rides on the weekends.

I am also an avid letter writer and would be happy to correspond with anyone, anywhere. I find it a great way to make new friends. My interests are horses, animals, the great outdoors, the beach, sport, gardening and making new friends. I'll even beat 'writers hand' as all letters will be answered!

Julie-Anne Tindall

16 Ypres Rd
WESTFIELD 6112.

Dear Tasmanians,

My boyfriend and myself intend to PUSH BIKE AROUND THE 'APPLE ISLE' in February and would be keen to meet any friendly inhabitants. We'd love to meet the beekeepers of the coveted leatherwood and clover honeys and any contacts regarding sheep shearing would also be appreciated as a possibility of settling and taking up employment. Keen to hear from you.

Melanie O'Halloran

'Rocklands'
PO Box 20
BALMORAL 3407

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Hello Grass Roots People,

I am requiring information, some advice and friendships from readers who can relate to the HERPES SIMPLEX VIRUS 2 which has affected (researchers say) one in five males and females in Australia. At present I am taking a chemical drug to suppress the attacks. I wish to, if possible, use a more natural or herbal remedy to alleviate the problem. It has been difficult to say whether garlic is really doing enough, if anything, to help. Would anyone understanding the situation be able to tell me of any herbs or non-manmade chemical substances which could possibly do damage to the virus? In my own self I have found HSV 2 to be a physical and mental experience not at all wanted or asked for. A more down to earth, grassroots lifestyle and a less stressful home and occupation is possibly a part remedy. I would like to communicate with any GRs who can read these writings. Peace to all.

Graham
PO Box 6728
CMC CAIRNS 4870.

Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you to everyone who answered my last letter in Feedback. It was lovely to hear from all of you. We have been living here for eighteen months now and the town is growing rapidly. Hundreds of new houses are being built for the increasing population. We are a multi-national population – Australians, Canadians, Americans, Scots, Brits and more. That's just the expatriates, then of course we have the PNG people from virtually every province in the country and over 700 different languages are spoken in PNG, so you can imagine the noise at our one and only 'supermarket' on pay days! There is also an open air market, a newsagency, a chemist, 2 banks, post office, travel centre and a fast food joint called 'Gobble and Go'. A new hardware and trade store is being built at the moment. All these businesses are PNG owned or leased which is very good for the country as a whole.

There are of course disadvantages to living here. The isolation of the place is very hard for some people to deal with. Diseases such as malaria, TB, bronchitis and all manner of gastric flu run rampant, the way the water is turned off at breakfast time occasionally is exasperating and we hardly ever see the moon or stars because of the constant heavy cloud cover. But then there is the beauty of this country, real mountains soaring thousands of feet into the clouds, the deepest valleys, waterfalls everywhere, butterflies, birds such as miniature kingfishers with iridescent blue feathers, virgin rainforest that feels absolutely prehistoric and is!! We find shell fossils in the creeks everywhere which shows these mountains were once under the ocean. I could go on forever about the place.

Why I'm really writing is to talk about SCREEN PRINTING. I conduct a 2 day workshop every week here, attended by about 10 expatriate women and 5 PNG men and women – all very enthusiastic, producing some exciting work, a really good mix of European and PNG art forms. I'd like to know how to produce photo screens. No body here knows how and I can't find any books on the subject. Can anyone help me? Please send all mail by air as surface can take three months to arrive. Best wishes to you all.

Cathryn Backer
PO Box 512
Tabubil

WESTERN PROVINCE PNG.

Dear Grass Roots Readers,

Indulge in complete privacy and tranquillity – book yourself into CLARENDON FARM, Taree. I spent the most peaceful and relaxing week there recently having seen a feature article in *Grass Roots*. Sharyn and Rex Cox are perfect hosts and the cottage they have created is everything you could hope for in good taste and character. Its situation in Clarendon is breathtaking. Clarendon basically has everything and I hope to return. Thank you *Grass Roots*.

Orna Doyle
Henry Lane
Newbridge
Co. Kildare
REP OF IRELAND.

Dear Grass Roots Friends,

I write this letter with hope that somebody may be able to assist me in locating any books on LEATHER SHOES. One particular publication I know of and would like to obtain a copy of, or photocopies, is *Make It Yourself Shoe Book* by Christine Lewis Clark, or if anybody has patterns for shoes (that don't look like moccasins) or can help me anyway they can, towards obtaining the information I ask for, I will gladly pay for any photocopying or expenses entailed to get the end result. All letters will be answered.

Kres & Pam Dubbin
'Vinegaroon'
9 Upper Brogo Road
QUAAMA 2550.

Dear GR Folk,

We as GR folk are carers of the land and love the simple life. I have been more than friends with a family who have descended from SOLOMON ISLAND roots. Our friendship goes back 18 years. I have great respect for their ways and them. Noel Fatowna is now 60 years old and has just had a book published – *Fragments Of A Lost Heritage*. It's the story of his family's grass roots. It's a moving book and I'm sure GR folk would be more than interested in reading it. It's about the black man's survival after being forced to come here to Australia. I am hoping to go to the Solomon Islands to learn some bush remedies from them (if they'll teach me!). Gone are the days when whites teach blacks. At last I hope some of us are learning what we as a race should have realised 200 years ago. Colour is only skin deep. We are all one blood. The so called white superior ways are wrecking our whole planet. The black simpler ways are sensible and in most cases lead to a more caring way of life, for people and our earth. Peace to you.

Rowena Mahe
PO Box 193
MACKAY 4740.

Dear GR Folk Everywhere,

Hi to all, and what a great mag, took out a sub after first reading from cover to cover.

We are a family of 6 including dog, who have made the move across the 'ditch' from Dunedin NZ to this warmer eastern coast of Oz. After travelling up and down the coast from Coffs Harbour to Mackay we have decided the Sunshine Coast is for us. We are residing in Bucasia until the end of the '89 school year and then intend heading south, anywhere from POMONA TO MALENY would suit. We would like to buy a small tree studded acreage (cheap) close to coast etc, but still countrified, where we can get on with our lives and dreams and build our mud brick home. If anyone could help us out with information about accommodation, possibly long term, we would love to hear from you. Also if anybody has built or is planning to build in mud brick in this area we would love to hear from you as well. Love, peace and goodwill to all.

Chris & Sally-Ann
127 Waverley St
BUCASIA 4750.

Dear GR People,

Well, I think we'll finally make it to Jerry's Plains and should be there by now. Finally sold our Sydney home and are moving on to our 27 acres of beautiful land in the Hunter Valley. Thank you to all those who have given helpful information over the last year or two to prepare us for ALTERNATIVE LIVING. I think we timed it right as everything in Sydney has skyrocketed. We will 'rough it' for several months in our little shack while our home is built. I can't wait to get there and plant out 40 trees and shrubs. I've cared for them 2-3 years from seedlings and August, after the frosts, should be an ideal time to transplant them. I'm sure we won't be sorry for the move – the peace and tranquillity, the fresh air and friendly country people make it all worthwhile! To all those who are 'thinking about it', realise the benefits of the country with plenty of space to create and do all those things you can't do on a suburban block. Be adventurous! Take the plunge!

Marie Cantrill
64 Faraday Rd
PADSTOW 2211.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Grass Roots,

On Friday 19th May nearly 500 people turned out in Melbourne to hear the public lecture of the FINDHORN FOUNDATION, Scotland. The focus of the night was 'New Patterns of Civilisation' and 'The Findhorn Foundation 26 Years On'. The speakers were Eileen Caddy, co-founder, Craig Gibsone, present director (who happens to be an Aussie), Joan Germain, ex longterm community member.

The presentation started with a 19 minute video spanning the 26 year history of the community, from 3 people in one caravan to 260 people living in harmony with nature and each other. The community eventually became totally self-sufficient and still is today, even generating income for the wider community who have no ties to the community. They now have 17 separate departments, like, energy efficient building, computer software, painting, publishing, arts and crafts, graphic etc. Each one works within the Foundation but all are open to all who need their services. They also have a Steiner school, run a guest program, 2 international conferences each year and workshops throughout the year, and do all this while having as little impact as possible on the planet as is humanly possible and by sharing with each other.

The success of this community I believe is in their continued ability to adapt, be open to change and each other and want to change themselves and the planet for the better. Craig Gibsone said on the night that the British Government has declared the people living at Findhorn Community to be living financially below the poverty line. Maybe we will all have to live below the poverty line to raise our quality of life to match this. I feel we will have to drop our high materialistic standards, share what we have and get back to the basic community sharing with each other in all areas.

The simple beauty of it all is that it is all done by normal people like you and me but the difference is they want to change. We don't have to go to Findhorn to create what they have, we have all the ingredients right here and only have to decide when to start. It's there if you want it. Keep sharing.

Peter Shaw
11 Lytton St
ELWOOD 3184.

Dear David and Megg,

After moving from Sydney to our 5 acre block of land 12 months ago, we have established ourselves and have built our home and raised both vegies and cattle.

We purchased our block in April-May 1988 and were notified in August 1988 that it would be resumed for the proposed WOLFDENE DAM within 10 years, so having already been committed with the start of our house and having three children - Graham 10, Kylie 8, Anthony 6 - there was no turning back. We are situated 1/2 hour from the Gold Coast and 1 hour from Brisbane. The proposed dam will occupy 41,000 acres and mean moving 3000 people (most of whom are environmentally conscious). I know that my family has worked hard to obtain what we have and it's wrong that such prime hinterland real estate be lost forever including native animals, rainforest and heritage. To date the Council is still issuing building permits and real estate agents are also selling land affected by the Wolfdene Dam, hopefully they are now telling prospective owners about the dam, unlike us, even our solicitor (who was recommended by the Law Society) did not find out for us. Sorry to have such a gripe but it may make others aware. If any person would like further information on activities regarding the Wolfdene Dam issue I would like to assist.

On our land we have two cows, bull and steer, 40 chooks, 2 pigs, horse and ducks, our vegie patch is starting to produce and we hope to be able to set up a co-op for home grown foods, bread, milks and meats, at least this way we know our families' foods will be safe and chemical free. I would like to hear from other grassrooters in the S/E Queensland region and locally so we can exchange information, also co-op's who can help me with their methods. All letters will be answered. Prosperous future to all.

Craig & Sara Firth
296 Mt Tamborine Rd
TAMBORINE 4272.

Dear Megg and David,

Hi there again! I wish to thank you for having a CONTACT SECTION in *Grass Roots* as it was through Gilham Strode that I met my new wife called Janice on 11th June 1989. I would like to thank Gilham and only hope one day we can do the same for her.

We are leaving Melbourne on a delayed honeymoon due to so many problems getting things done, in changing Janice's name to mine, plus now a postal strike has prevented us obtaining more plastic cards enabling us to get money out from the banks, but they don't really care these days. I would like to let my friends know that we will eventually be leaving here and heading up into the country further again as the highway is too noisy here now. I would love to do some caretaking again around Victoria. I have some disabilities but can do gardening and look after things.

I suggest to anybody deciding to build a mudbrick or stone house be aware of the Council at Orbost, as they won't accept anything that looks like this. The plans aren't accepted and you cannot live in a caravan on your property there either. So be wise if you're buying down that way. Jan Campbell, if those are your intentions, check first.

Well Megg, I would like to say thanks to you for all the happiness this magazine has brought from the first edition. Unfortunately most of my copies were lost in the big bush fires at Gembrook and Emerald area, but I will eventually buy them all again, as I can afford them, now I am a pensioner. I am also introducing more people to this beautiful magazine. I often wonder what has happened to Anita Crosby since she left Somerville. Also what has happened to Diana Horton and Julia Law as I would like to make contact with them in my next trip through. Daphne Everitt - we shall be up to see you soon again. May we both wish you and all readers well in the future. Thanks again.

Colin Franklin
C/- PO Box 764
SHEPPARTON 3630.

Dear Feedback Readers,

We noticed a letter in Feedback from George Bryant which advocated that some *Grass Roots* readers may care to join the Australian Federation for the Welfare of Animals (AFWA) - a name which gives one the impression that this group was formed to work for ANIMAL WELFARE. However when one delves deeper into the membership one finds it is made up of people such as scientists who experiment on animals, factory farmers who house chickens and pigs in restrictive cages and stalls, rodeo people, circus owners, and kangaroo shooters and processors - in short, those very people that the animal rights groups are saying need to dramatically improve the way in which they treat the animals in their care.

AFWA was undoubtedly formed as a lobby group to fight the animal rights' groups and having recently attended their seminar, it would appear to me that most of their work concentrates on defending their use of animals and 'knocking' those who say it should be improved and in some cases, phased out. This is borne out by a quick perusal of an AFWA newsletter which apart from comments on animal rights' groups, contains articles on how necessary it is to use animals for experiments, and whether or not cows have a right to refuse to be milked. This last statement is of course preposterous and the answer is obvious. When humans take a calf away from its lactating mother, they have the responsibility to take the cow's milk to stop the cow suffering - suffering that resulted from the human intervention. The best course would have been not to have taken the calf from the cow in the first place!

In summary, before any *Grass Roots* readers who may use animals consider joining AFWA to increase their knowledge on animal welfare, they should fully investigate this group and their 'animal welfare' work. Their principles and objectives sound honourable - but one should question whether their intentions and the work they do will genuinely improve the welfare of livestock, experimental animals, entertainment animals, wildlife or companion animals.

Jacqui Kent
Animal Liberation (Qld) Ltd
GPO Box 1787
BRISBANE 4001.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Folk,

I have the SA Dept of Agriculture fact sheet for MANUFACTURE OF YOGHURT, but I feel that its requirements or recommendations assume the existence of equipment which did not exist in Bulgaria at the time yoghurt was invented. Further, addition of gelatine is not allowed by Jewish dietary law, as well as being objectionable to other groups. Also, yoghurt was probably made before electricity or gas, stainless steel, plastics or thermos flasks existed. I do not know what temperature is needed for L. Acidophilus to grow. I have checked at a local health food shop and found that agar - which is permissible in Jewish dietary law etc - is exorbitant in price. Where can some be found? Or perhaps pectin? I do not have the equipment to hold culture to constant temperature, though I have had success in getting bread to rise by covering it with a blanket and putting a hot water bottle next to the bread pan. Can anyone give me a scheme to make yoghurt without stainless steel, thermos bottle, gelatine, or electricity or gas. Also I am on a Pritikin diet which tries to minimise consumption of '-oses', lactose being one. Can you help me?

Len Levine
14 Jervois St
PORT AUGUSTA 5700.

Dear Grass Roots,

We'd like to commend you on a wonderful and informative magazine. It has been a source of inspiration for us for one thing or another over the years and will continue to be so I'm sure.

Our reason for our first letter to you is not a happy one. Our daughter, Jess, has a RARE CANCER called neuroblastoma, at this early stage in her treatment involving regular trips to Sydney for chemotherapy, she has shown us what a great little fighter she is. Always with a big smile, life is still a source of enjoyment for Jess. She is a real little beauty. We love her dearly.

What we would like to know from GR readers who may have been similarly unfortunate is of any BENEFICIAL DIET REGIMENS or foods that may help her in this battle. The hospital diicians have been helpful, but little seems truly known about it. Lisa has been in contact with naturopaths and their outlook is somewhat different also, although we do prefer the more 'organic vegetable' approach they have. Could any readers shed some light on this? We would appreciate any response. Happiness to all.

David and Lisa Murphy
42 Gwydir St
MOREE 2400.

Dear Megg,

When we finally shrug off the ties of city living we would like to build a berm-style home. Do you know of an easy way to discover which local councils will allow the construction of ALTERNATIVE STYLE HOUSING short of writing to them directly? This knowledge would certainly expedite our land search.

Thank you for *Grass Roots*. Apart from the hints and tips, it's reassuring to know we're not the only ones who continue to yearn, year after year, to put down our roots out of the suburban sprawl, and to further our harmonisation with our natural environment.

Peter, Sue and Benjamin Hartman
22 Swansea Rd
CHELSEA 3196.

Dear Grass Roots,

My wife and I are seriously considering a move to the BUNDABERG REGION of Queensland. The reason this area appeals to me is because the climate I have been told (by one of the estate agents) is ideal - not too hot in summer and not too cold in winter, with plenty of rain through summer but still good falls in winter. Also at the moment land prices are still reasonable. My wife is 40 and I am 43. We are planning on taking a tour by bus from Sydney through to the Daintree area probably in February 1990. At our time of life such a move from one side of the country to the other is fairly daunting, and we feel we must be totally committed before we make such a leap. The purpose of this letter is to gather as much knowledge from others that have already made such a step, or are living in this area and can tell us of their experiences and can give us as much advice as possible. I feel that such advice is less likely to be biased than coming from

someone such as real estate agents who may be only interested in making just another sale. If there is anyone who would like to show us what they have accomplished while we are over there we would love to hear from you as well.

I love the magazine, I find there is a beautiful spirit among the people that share unselfishly with each other.

I have some seeds from what we call SEVEN YEAR BEANS, I don't know the proper name, which I will be happy to forward to any who would like some. The bean is supposed to last that long giving continuous cropping. It doesn't like frost, but will come back in the spring. It is a very large vine needing some support like a trellis. It not only gives an abundant crop, but shade as well. The beans are similar to peas but are flat not rounded as are peas. Please write soon and I promise to answer all letters.

Garry Leicester
3 Walter St
BOULDER 6432.

Dear GR People,

Are you interested in the future of TASMANIA'S WORLD HERITAGE AREA? How should this magnificent natural area be managed? The Tasmanian Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage wants to hear your ideas. From the beginning of December 1989 until the end of February 1990, the Department will be seeking submissions from all interested individuals and organisations. Your submission can be as long or as short as you like. Pamphlets detailing the boundaries of the area, important management issues and giving advice on writing your submission are available from the Department. So, have your say! Your ideas will be considered by the Department in the preparation of a draft management plan for the area. For pamphlets and any further information, please contact:

Sam Rando
Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage
GPO Box 44A
HOBART 7001.
Ph: 002-303-912.
Fax: 002-238-765.

Dear Readers,

In reply to Evelyn Viney's claims (GR 72) GARLIC is *not* an alternative to HEARTWORM tablets and it is *not* of use in the treatment of hydatids (tapeworm). Garlic is a good nutritional additive. For some, but not all, dogs it does provide some deterrent to flea and tick infestation. I approached a naturopathic vet at a Brisbane clinic who is using a homoeopathic alternative. For dogs she has tested as initially free of heartworm, regularly given the homoeopathic alternative and monitored constantly with antigenic tests, she has achieved a two-year, heartworm-free success. She has achieved a similar success with a homoeopathic hookworm treatment. The expense of doing multiple scientifically supervised testing for sustainable results, publishable data and acceptance is astronomical. I have heard of a female naturopathic vet somewhere in NSW who has developed a once-only vaccine for heartworm in dogs but I have not been able to discover who or where or any details whatsoever. Please check with your local vet or find a homoeopathic vet before you threaten your animal with a potential death sentence. Ignorance or reliance on unproven folklore is no excuse. Take care.

Lilian Walters
30 Frank Street
CABOOLTURE 4510.

Dear Readers,

I'm after any information available on bio-loos or ORGANIC TOILETS. We have 30 acres near Gympie, and use 12V power. I've seen some bio-loos but they need 240V power to run a fan. It will be an inside toilet on a concrete slab, so if someone knows of a suitable type, I'd love to hear from you. We've been away from our paradise for 2 years now - mainly to straighten up the budget - and are looking forward to returning at the end of the year.

Marion Buwilda-Pedler
C/- PO
BATCHELOR 0845.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Grass Roots Friends,

As a middle-aged 'suburbanite' I can still confidently say that *Grass Roots* is my very favorite mag, and I can't wait for each 2 months to be up so I can buy it again. Like a lot of you, one of my favourite sections is the Feedback letters. The underlying sense of caring and sharing is so evident which is why I'm writing this letter - to introduce you to a very 'caring and sharing' concept in our neighbourhood.

It is an organisation called 'SPAN' the concept being to 'span' the gap between young and old of any race, colour and creed. It was originally a project started by the Brotherhood of St. Laurence some 10 years ago, the philosophy behind it being that older people have so much wisdom and care to share back into the community - but instead of this being utilised, older people were so often made to feel that they were redundant, and just about ready to plant with the cabbages! Hence, after buying a house to serve as a community base, the Brotherhood got the project going, and after a few years of learning and growing it became a self reliant co-operative run by the committee members themselves.

Although the members are mainly older/retired people there is no age barrier and people of any age are welcome to come along to learn or teach. The workers (except for 2 paid co-ordinators) are all voluntary and they work on a variety of programs with kids from different schools in the area. There are classes held in all different sorts of craft work, cooking (Rose's scones and Ruby's cakes are famous!) woodcraft, car maintenance, and so on. The kids come from the schools in small groups with their teachers, and really enjoy the intimacy of learning something in a home-like atmosphere with caring older people. As well, there is a 'reading' program, where kids from a local secondary college come along to read to their 'listener'. This is on a one to one basis, and has been a wonderful help to most of those children, developing both their reading and social skills. There is also an Adult Literacy program run along the same lines.

As well as teaching, the 'Spanners' do their fair share of learning too! There are classes in creative writing, Italian, an exercise class, a monthly book group, a 'Social Issues' group, and numerous 'one off' sessions are run, like a recent 20 week community work course, a 10 week art class, and so on. The classes are either free or you pay the nominal sum of a dollar.

None of these older people are just 'pretty faces' either! They work long and hard to improve the quality of life, not just for pensioners, but are active in many areas of improvement in the neighbourhood community, health, transport, environment, and so on.

Lest it all sounds like too much work, there are some purely social activities - a monthly 'budget' lunch, where folk take it in turn to provide/cook a good (but cheap) meal, cinema outings, bus trips to various places of interest, etc. We even utilise the house's small back garden space, with one member keenly growing his vegies, and the solitary fig tree being denuded to have a merry jam making session!

Well, I can hear you folk in the further regions of the NT saying 'That's not much good to me, you're down there in the south!' True, but I thought you would like to hear about it anyway and perhaps it will stir someone, somewhere, to want to start a similar project in their own area. For those who do live in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, here is a place to come if you are lonely, would like to do something to help, and just plain enjoy yourself! Anyone, any age, is free to drop in for a cuppa and a look. And if this has inspired anyone to want to know more, please feel free to contact Penny or Laraine during normal business hours - we have lots of info to send out on 'getting started' if you feel your area needs something like Span. Contact:

Span
298 Victoria Rd
THORNBURY 3071.
Ph: 03-480-1364.

Dear Grass Roots,

I have just finished writing to Bryan, Jenny and Holly (GR 73) and I'd like to share with you the great feeling I have, being able to share my experiences and thoughts and knowing that there are people who have a similar caring and concern for the quality of life. It is the first time I have read your magazine and it is like an extension of the way my life is heading - thank you.

Having spent 2 years out in western Queensland I am now in western NSW and will be getting married early next year to a wonderful country man here in the Cowra area. We will be renting a small home for a few years until we gather enough resources to build a 'humble abode' on our farm. If any GR readers have any hints on how to SET UP A HOME, I'd love to hear from you. Also, any practical hints and ideas on inexpensive ways to create a beautiful down to earth home would be much appreciated.

Simone Hudson
WEST WYALONG 2671.

Dear Megg,

I wonder if it's possible for someone to write an article on the benefits of GROWING KENAF to produce the finest paper instead of our trees being cut down in ever increasing numbers. A variety of hemp, it takes 5 months to grow and is a renewable crop. It would take a great deal of pressure off our wheat farmers who are facing unfair competition from USA and the EEC. Furthermore, *Beyond 2000* carried a feature where a Taiwanese invented a press to turn rice flour into a soup bowl. The wheat flour should be just as useful and could eliminate the millions of plastic trays which are used in the food industry turning a possible wheat flour surplus into a viable non polluting asset.

A very good anti-erosion plant is kudzu. Does anyone have information on that? Also what can be done about growing chlorella and spirulina in Australia?

Geoff Naylor
Box 186
BERRI 5343.

Dear GR Folk,

Would any NZ readers know who and where are their farmers who use HOMOEOPATHIC TECHNIQUES to keep sheep and goats in good health? I saw a documentary once on ABC-TV *Countrywide* but names or addresses were not given. I hate using chemical drenches - apart from the cost (now about \$200 per annum). Also does anyone have a cure or preventative for scurf on Angora goats - I don't know whether it's caused by lice or something else.

May your grasses keep growing.

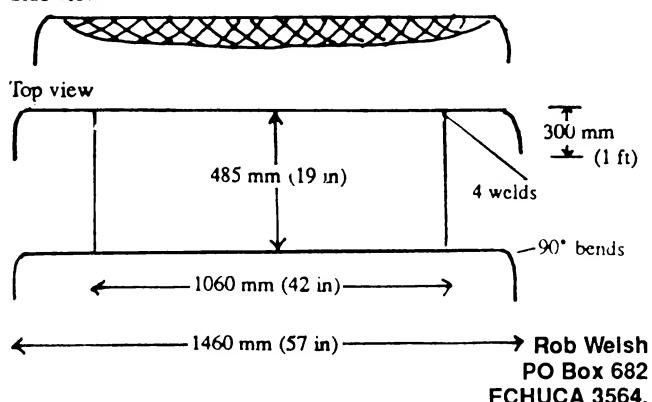
Eve Gray
86 Mount View Rd
MILLFIELD 2325.

Dear GR Readers,

Hi I'm planning on SHIFTING TO TASSIE this year to buy land and work towards a self-sufficient lifestyle, I would love to hear from people in Tassie for friendship and advice about living, buying land, rates etc in the north of the state, also employment opportunities. Anyone with the same goal willing to work together with ideas please write.

I thought you might want to put a plan of my dog Elly's bed in *Grass Roots*. It's comfortable, clean and cheap. It's made of 12 mm (1/2 in) water pipe cut to length, 90° bends made for legs then welded together. It's made just the size so a hessian bag with both ends undone can slip over the frame. Sew up the ends and presto you have a bed.

Side view



Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Readers,

After reading *Grass Roots* for many years you get the feeling that you are part of a large family relationship, listening to successes and failures, hopes and dreams, laughter and tears, hints and ideas, the enthusiasm and the looking back. It gives me the confidence to write myself, now that I have a problem, to ask if any kind readers could perhaps give me some advice from their own experiences.

I am in my late forties and have recently lost my husband to a sudden illness. I look around now at our few acres and house that we built. I don't want to leave it and yet don't know HOW TO CARRY ON. Apart from the devastating loss of a loved one, everything seems beyond me. I can tackle most things around a home and garden but now I see those things that I never noticed before: fence wires need straining; a tree across a fence; things too heavy to move alone. I could go on but I am sure most of you are familiar with what I mean.

My dilemma: do I give it up and move to somewhere 'manageable'; do I look for a helper who would live here in exchange for a hand with the heavy things; do I keep on trying to do it all myself and feel more and more exhausted? Do any readers have any advice or ideas to help set me on the right path again? I love the place but don't want to become its prisoner. I too need time to look at sunrises or watch the moon come up, and still be me.

Thanks to everyone for the stories, hints and ideas that this great little magazine gives and for the way it brings people together as a family. Peace and happiness to all.

Denise Hansen
C/- PO
BARGO 2574.

Dear People,

I am writing to you on behalf of a group called CASM (Citizens Against Sand Mining). In October 1989 CASM completed a legal challenge in the Land and Environment Court against Australian Holdings P/L to try and PREVENT SAND MINING in the Newrybar Valley, Lennox Head, NSW (between Ballina and Byron Bay). We believe that sand mining is not an appropriate industry for our beautiful North Coast area, remembering the continuing devastating effects of past sand mining projects. Advice from other organisations (the National Parks Association of NSW, Dept of Agriculture and Soil Conservation Service) has supported our concerns about possible environmental damage to the neighbouring Ballina Nature Reserve and problems for local agriculture.

A legal challenge such as the one undertaken by CASM is by no means cheap and much effort has gone into fundraising to pay for court costs. Any support from readers would be greatly appreciated. We still need to raise over \$30,000! The result of the court case, handed down in early November, was that sand mining would be allowed in the Newrybar Valley, but only under strict enforcement of over 90 stringent conditions. We feel that we have achieved at least a partial victory, but there is still much to be done.

Janelle Knox
Lot 2 Ross Lane
Lennox Head 2478.

Dear Grass Roots Family,

When I last wrote in 1986, my family consisted of three MASSIVELY ALLERGIC sons, now 6, 9 and 11. By the time the letter came to print the boys had become so ill (due to aerial spray drift from nearby large farming companies) we were forced to move quickly. Some time ago we were rejoined by their father, no longer able to work at his beloved job, or to care for himself. At first there was no explanation for the vagueness, the headaches, skin rashes, aches and pains, liver problems . . . then the blood tests gave the answer. He had used herbicides and insecticides since 1964, along with the benzene type products they were normally mixed with, for spraying. Now he is one of the most severely affected men in Australia, and the boys are believed to be genetically (DNA) affected, as a result. With some professional help and a great deal of personal research, we can live a moderately normal life – whenever we are in an environmentally friendly area.

The high areas above the coast are the safest, facing the sea winds, with our backs protected from the inland winds (which we find a

problem). To find such a place where we can continue our organic and permaculture lifestyle and our studies into natural therapies for 'biocide poisoning' is very difficult. Anywhere is of interest if the situation is environmentally suitable, and affordable. Having been reared on GR farms, we know from experience what many only dream about. (We have seen both sides now, and feel we are well qualified to choose.) Perhaps there is an area where we may be of help to others – as well as improving our health!

If anyone would like to contact us, in regard to safe areas, allergies or chemical problems (proven or suspected), we would be grateful for a line. Only by increasing the number of aware people can we hope to protect what is left of our world.

'Ex-Lone Parent'
PO Box 181
PARKES 2870.

Dear GR,

Hi! I am at present travelling in Aussie land again (for my winter time, your summer) and enjoying it very much. I have been able to stop by and meet some penfriends I obtained through your Feedback, so I want to say thanks for that. *Grass Roots* was one of the first magazines I picked up when I arrived in Cairns. I plan to travel on DOWN THE COAST to Victoria this time, zigzagging inland at times as we have a rented car. I am travelling with a friend from Canada this trip, so it is easier for me to see more of the out of the way places. Plan to stay for about three months, returning home about March 1.

I still would love to have more penfriends, so if anyone cares to write I most certainly will answer. I am a travelling 60 year old grandma. All the best to everyone.

Marvel E Storlie
18770 West 60th Ave
GOLDEN, COLORADO 80403 USA.

Dear GR Readers,

G'day to all. In March or April 1990 I intend to TRAVEL BY PUSHBIKE from my home town (Port Lincoln) via Adelaide, the Murray River, Canberra and roughly following the Great Dividing Range to Bowen in Qld. The purpose of the trip is to see some of our country and meet people, so I would like to hear from anybody living in those general areas that's involved in organic growing or an alternative lifestyle, who would like some help for a few days in return for some board and to 'see how it's done', so to speak. I have read a lot about what people have done in this magazine and I would like to see and experience it first hand. I would also be interested in hearing from anybody, male or female, who perhaps would like to come along either all or part of the way. I think it will be a great trip and besides, I'll need some company or it's going to get awful quiet out there! You would need to be a relatively fit and cheerful type, so drop us a line if anybody is interested.

Darin Howell
RSD Poonindie
VIA PT LINCOLN 5607.

Dear Grass Roots,

Today I have been told by a Social Security investigator that I don't qualify anymore for SICKNESS BENEFITS because I live on more than 5 acres! I went on benefits because I was 3 months in hospital being treated for cancer and a social worker at the hospital thought it might be nice if my family could eat. I am still unable to work but the S/S laws have been changed and one of the assets tests is the 5 acre one. The S/S man says I may have to repay the benefits. 5 acres doesn't make anyone in the bush a millionaire, but if you lived on 5 acres of waterfront in a city or town you could still get sickness benefits. This is a disgrace and very bad discrimination.

I wish our Federal politicians were capable of mature decisions. The quality of our family's life is very dear to me and to be played around with by silly bureaucrats who live in cities is the last straw. That is why I am bringing this childish law to the notice of others who live in the bush and may live on 30 acres like myself and may feel like doing something about it.

Roberino
Lot 4 Arrawarra Beach Rd
ARRAWARRA 2456.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Grass Roots People,

Thank goodness there is a magazine to put the world into perspective! Are there any kind animal lovers who could help us out? Our daughter has been very ill and desperately needs to live in better conditions than we live in now (an old 15 ft caravan on a farm). We have had heaps of expenses but are going to try to find somewhere to rent, without a long trek through the rain to the toilet and bath and within range of the hospital. Our problem is that we have two 12 year old dogs and no-one will rent us anything near Melbourne. We are honest and hardworking and desperately need somewhere for Johanna to live. We can't put our dogs down as everyone suggests because we believe they have a right to live too, and besides, we love them. We may be able to get a home through the Ministry in 6-12 months. Could anyone LOOK AFTER OUR DOGS for a while (or give them a good home)? They are medium size, don't bite, good with other animals, chooks, children also good watch dogs. Our daughter just won't stay healthy the way we live now and, although we care about the dogs, she is precious. Thank you and luck to you all.

Karen, Ashley and Johanna Dempster
'Wattlevale'
Broadhurst Lane
WANDONG 3758.

To All Concerned Citizens,

Currently I am running the mortgage gauntlet and it doesn't look too hopeful. As usual while our upper society languish in financial comfort, we mere mortals at the bottom in the scheme of things have to do it the hard way to meet our own commitments, as well as donating continually towards the said comfort of aforesaid well heeled. Anyway it got me to thinking about this problem and I very quickly came up with an answer which is so simple it would probably work, which would be a very good reason for the government to reject it outright.

I say – let overseas trade solve its own problem. Put an extra 50 percent or more TAX ON IMPORTED GOODS. Give Australian manufacturers the chance to fight back and show that this country's product is better than the overseas competitor. That extra tax should then be used to finance a non-profit home loan bank for low-income people – first home buyers in particular. Interest rates should be around 8 percent or so. Also co-operative home building and land ownership in towns should be investigated. By that I mean a prospective purchaser would buy into a proposed subdivision before or as it was being constructed. This would cut down the cost of such allotments by eliminating the investor-developer profit margin. These owners would then have a say in their own land estate style, plan, amenities, security, facility quality etc. – a bit like strata title.

These co-operatives would be like mini suburbs or communities with closer contact between participants. A common area in the centre of each estate would provide land for large food gardens and perhaps a couple of goats for milk etc. The excess produce would be sold or bartered at the co-op shop belonging to that estate. Instead of all this happening in the country as it quite often does now, it would be happening in cities and towns too, so many people could benefit from lower living costs. Perhaps then, the power of the almighty dollar would begin to fade and people wouldn't go round demanding higher wages or higher prices for a commodity.

With regard to the import tax increase, I am aware that some things can't be made here and we need these things, but in general most things could be made in Australia. Perhaps we need a revitalised business subsidy scheme to encourage local industry. What say ye? Shall we band together or will we continue to act like typical Australians and not worry about it?

Clarissa Townsend
PO Box 466
CALOUNDRA 4551.

Dear Grass Roots Folk,

I discovered *Grass Roots* a few months ago in the library and since then have borrowed most of the copies. How much I admire you and your readers in having the courage of your convictions and not succumbing to the 'Keep Up With The Jones' mentality. I live in the Dandenongs, Vic and am constantly amazed at the cross-section of society that live up here. We range from the struggling single

income/single parent households, to the unbelievably affluent. Happily, we are middling and are not so much complacent as fairly grateful for the quality of life we have here. The suburban sprawl is reaching out its ugly tendrils however and I guess when we become too concrete and bitumen-ed, we shall have the necessary impetus to move to greener pastures.

I would be grateful for some advice. What are people's ideas on MICROWAVE OVENS? I have heard so many conflicting reports. On one hand they are so convenient and food retains flavour and vitamins, on the other hand I've heard that they are cancer machines and birds won't eat food that comes out of a microwave. What do they know that I don't? Lastly, lost friends JAN AITCHESON and SUE KANE – where are you?

Anna Marie Hughes
C/- PO FERNY CREEK 3786.

Dear Grass Roots Parents,

You may have read about our school in GR 63, October 1987, entitled 'Steiner Schools' or you may be saying 'Where on earth is Maindample?'

Maindample is a small rural STEINER SCHOOL about 180 km north-east of Melbourne. We are in our fifth year and have a beautiful mudbrick building set in rolling hills about an hour's drive from Mt Buller and only minutes from Lake Eildon. The closest town is Mansfield. As we head into 1990 we find ourselves in a situation where we have much that the newer schools lack; buildings with lovely gardens, funding from the government, registration and a small but dedicated parent body. And yet we face the real possibility of closing down.

In 1989 we experienced major staff changes, resulting in many families withdrawing their children from the school. We now need a fresh beginning for 1990 with a new class teacher and many more children.

There must be many groups of families attempting to get a Steiner school going; why not come and share with us. Perhaps we can help each other in our endeavour to provide our children with a loving organic education, an education which will equip children and parents to be part of a positive future for our planet. 'Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives'. (Rudolph Steiner)

Maindample Steiner School
C/- RMB 6400
MANSFIELD 3722.

Dear People of Grass Roots,

Thank you for another year of GR enthusiasm and information. After the last 8 years of striving on a windswept 5 acres of sand near Geraldton, and of watching my children grow and go their own ways, as happy and relatively mature adults, I have now sold up and am enjoying time out to travel in this beautiful and vast country. I'm currently in the NT and drifting slowly and happily towards the east coast, meeting new people, enjoying the sunshine and looking for another PLACE TO SETTLE, perhaps a little less harsh than Geraldton. But I did have the pleasure of seeing trees we planted grow to six metres and to see my five acres, barren from overstocking and wind erosion, eventually produce a shoulder high crop of oats. I will try and write down some of what we learnt. I wish you all much happiness.

Margy Brooks
C/- J. Smallwood
PO
NORTHAMPTON 6535.

Dear Readers,

Is there anyone who has constructed or is in the process of constructing a MUD BRICK dwelling in the CENTRAL QUEENSLAND area? We are just at the inquiring stage and would be pleased to speak with someone with first hand knowledge, especially in the Rockhampton/Mt. Morgan or Gemfields areas. Anywhere reasonably close would be helpful.

L & G Harwood
6 Oak St
BLACKWATER 4717.

When the Man's Away

by Iriss Quigley, Chillingham, NSW.

Men – we shouldn't generalise but they are perplexing creatures. They'll forget the cat food, won't bother to ring to say they've been delayed but will turn up with a bucket of mushrooms 'because you like them'. They are usually not there when you want them and are never there when there is a crisis. Many don't seem to do all that much, but if they go away, why is there so much more to do, and why does the bull get out, the muffler drop off and, of course, the pump break down? Hopefully they improve with age like a good wine and mature to mellow helpfulness. Iriss Quigley's amusing story suggests this is so but it doesn't really answer why despite our independence and varied skills things still go wrong when the blighters are away.

Gaily I waved him goodbye as he bus-ed off to Perth, WA, which had to be done by road transport – 3 days of high-speed travel; still, the family would like to see him. I shuddered at the idea of interminable bus travel, and elected to stay home and 'mind' the farm; and of course I am, as one of my loved friends said recently 'old and frail' – although that sort of remark is apt to cause me serious blood pressure problems! Now, he had watered, petrolled, oiled, and 'fixed' the utility fine; he had carefully taken the water pump apart, ensuring it would continue to supply our creek water for years; he had ensured that the poultry food supplies were in order – pollard, bran, wheat, etc. and he had checked the cattle (a dozen or so) – some were 'springing', but didn't seem to be going to calve very soon; he had checked the house locks; and he had arranged for 2-3 neighbours to be on call! What could possibly go wrong?

The next morning, the much appreciated friend who was staying with me for a couple of days went to take her car out and found she had a flat battery. No problem; a jumper lead was available, and being a most efficient person she knew how to use it. I backed the utility up to effect the 'jump-over' job, which worked like a charm; all OK, so went to close the hood of the utility, and it wouldn't. We checked everything that might stop it (and my friend is intelligent, even if there is some doubt about me), alas it would not close. The electricity man who called then had a look but couldn't see why; finally I said I did belong to the NRMA, so rang them. The mechanic at the other end suggested several things, all of which we'd done; said it was a long way 21 km (13 miles) to send the service truck for such a simple thing, and would I wind some wire around the hood holding it down, tighten it thoroughly and bring the vehicle in to the workshop. 'Young man,' I said, 'I am 82½, and quite unlikely to wind any wire anywhere which would stay put.' Impasse! In the meantime my friend had to leave urgently, so I thought of our good engineer neighbour, and in desperation phoned him; he kindly came rushing to my aid, was puzzled as to why the hood wouldn't do its job, then found that *somewhat* the lock position had altered (I knew why, the man of the house had gone west). He spent an hour shifting screws, nuts and bolts to get the lock to work; finally, it did. I quietly decided not to open the hood again!

My friend had left to return south to her home, so I now had to cope alone; I'm not sure that I choose to cope; it would be easier not to try in my experience. The 'game' (well-bred) rooster next caught me without a stick in my hand and creeping up behind me used his rapier leg points to inflict bloody holes in my leg; royal red blood poured out of the vein he'd struck. Rapidly losing blood, I finished feeding the poultry, collected the eggs, went up to the house leaving a trail, bathed the four holes, bound them with some comfrey ointment, prepared some

dinner, went to bed aching, and spent the night doing the same. (For tetanus worriers, I'm able to encompass rusty nails, dirty lumps of tin and all the other hazards of a farm bare-footer, and have never worried about it – over many years.) Stiffly the next succeeding days I moved gingerly around; and then the hot dry weather (35°C/95°F) or more over several days), brought our pastures (already depleted) to nil; a couple of calves which should not have been born; and it became apparent quickly that the cattle would need supplementary feeding. Gritting the gums, I drove the 21 km (13 miles) to town, shrieking every time I had to use the brake; got the lucerne and the molasses lick – I wanted a drum of molasses, but couldn't think of any way to woman-handle it alone; returned home; and found I couldn't lift the bales of lucerne out of the ute, neither could I unlatch the tail-gate to slide them out. It's a specially strong lock on this ute. Ruminating, I decided to cut the rope binders on the lucerne bales and feed the 'biscuits' out by chucking them over the garage 1.2 m (4 ft) gate. I had a couple of days doing this, battling with cattle trying to leap the gate or to snatch a biscuit from me before I could throw it out; trying to see the bullied young heifers got something to eat; good basketball practice. This went on for some days; an hilarious experience, yeah? We don't usually have to feed cattle as our pastures are normally sufficient, but we were carrying a few too many for an exceptionally dry winter and spring. It soon appeared that the new calves (from heifers) could not get enough milk, and both looked like dying slowly; I hadn't any other supplementary calf feed or equipment; pastures are usually good enough – but not this year! Checking with a kind neighbour who called, he offered to take one calf home and feed it; and then I sold half the cattle including the other calf; the weather showed no signs of producing rain ever. He also removed the lucerne packs from the ute and stacked them for me; he was amazed I even thought of doing it. Feeding out became a race between placing the biscuits at various distances (so all would get a chance) and avoiding the massive nudging heads and horns of supplicating cattle. This went on for some weeks.

It soon became necessary to water the fruit trees, grapevines, vegetable garden (my organic pride and joy and mightily productive) and of course, of course, the pump gave out. It seemed everyone's pump gave out at the same time, as the pump man could not come for a few days, being overloaded with waterless farms. In the meantime, I'm carrying buckets of water from the house tanks to the vegetable garden, saving every drop from sink and bath for the flowers and languishing fruit trees, (an excuse not to wash up or bathe) and, with everyone else, praying for rain. Where are those usual storms? Our kind engineer friend eventually heard of my plight, and phoned that he would come and fix it (as soon as he had fixed

his own, which had also given out!) which he did, and I relaxed some.

I found the cattle learned who was the giver of food and waited stealthily for me, so I had to toss out some lucerne if I wished to proceed to the garden; and also found that I couldn't carry any produce back from the garden, or a gyrating animal would filch the celery stalks, the lettuce or cabbage from under my arm. Life has its dangers, especially when they would nudge me with their sledge-hammer heads to draw attention to their lucerneless plight.

Some time previously a bee-keeper friend kindly offered to help me clean out the hives for spring; he arrived unexpectedly one morning (shortly after my sensational hill slide – of which more anon). Of course I had to help a bit, so stood around whilst he undertook most of the work. Some frames heavy with honey were removed and these he took home, saying he would do the extraction; oh, heavenly relief; ours is a hand-model extractor. When he had gone, I picked up some of the honeycomb laden with rich honey and chewed; alas, hidden in the comb was one half-drowned bee, angry, which promptly stung me on the tongue! So, not only could I not walk, but now could not talk! A male neighbour happened to call to borrow a tool, I tried to explain to him, slurping, gasping, making weird sounds; but eventually took his hand and led him to the 44 gallon wheat bin of chook-food, which I could not open, although I had sledge hammered, pulled, pushed, and oratorally supplicated; it sure is a strong lock. Illumination came to my rescuer and he promptly, seemingly with one hand, undid the lid; chooks had been getting bread and vegetables for a day or so and they relished their normal wheat feed that night.

Now our house entrance is several hundred yards from the house, and a slope of some 32° upwards. It's bituminised and gravelled, no trouble at all with a vehicle, but a sharp climb by hoofs. Mail, papers, parcels, etc are all left in the box by the roadside, up the slope. About the time of the lucerning, etc. I was limping down the hill when I slithered on the gravel – the bottle of apple juice went one way, the papers and mail another, and I rolled down the hill towards the creek; it isn't a dangerous creek, but a dampening effect isn't welcome, and there's a few deepish holes. I stopped on the edge of a bath and found I had wrenched the same leg as the rooster had damaged; and now what is called hobbling, I used the barbed wire fence for support to get to the house. Of course, it happened that of the three original 'helpers', everyone was away, or in hospital, or sick – so I had to cope, whether I wished or not; and the phone was on the blink and I had no means of getting the news to the Telecom people. The pain kept me awake at night, so I flung some blankets and pillows onto the kitchen couch, got some hot water bottles, loaded the low table with fruits and drinks and lay down to die! (I couldn't of course, because I was the only person to feed the animals, chooks, water dying fruit trees, etc. There was a certain amount of neglect for 48 hours.)

Hobbling around, I thought I'd have a look at the bee hive which had been robbed, so just peered around the bee-box; it was hot thundery weather, and I expect the bees also had not been able to restore their lost honey; so, in fine formation, four spitfire bees took off, to land on my face without any provocation, and for days I looked as though I had given up weight-watching entirely. One more to Mr Murphy.

So here I am, battered, swollen, bloodless, limping, aged and incapacitated, in the grip of malnutrition (who prepares meals in these circumstances?), slowly coping with one disaster after another. When he returns, shall I tearfully relate my successive tragedies; or shall I just smile and say 'I hope you had a lovely time. I missed you!'?

NATIONAL PERMACULTURE CONFERENCE

Permaculture is a sensible way of looking at the environment – around the home, the farm or the city. It is both an art and a science, concerning itself with the quality of life of the human being and the responsible management of the landscape. With growing awareness of ecological problems and the shortness of time to repair the damage, permaculture design ideas could offer ways to repair and sustain our environment.

On 6-8 April 1990 the 4th Permaculture Conference will take place in Albury-Wodonga, preceded on 2-4 April by a convergence in which permaculture consultants and diplomats will share experiences and discuss directions for the future. The conference itself will present speakers and workshops on a variety of topics, including edible landscaping, success in sustainability, alternatives in energy and healing, studies of the Murray River system and development of a permaculture village. These will be followed by an open forum where guest speakers will provide answers to practical problems. Coordinator of this year's conference is Vries Gravestein, well known in the north east for his work in permaculture design and sustainable farming practices. Costs are: convergence \$120 including meals; conference \$75 with meals, day tickets \$22 including lunch. Enquiries and registration to Chiltern Permaculture Services, RMB 1130, Chiltern 3683. Ph: 057-261-596.

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FINDING NEW DIRECTIONS

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STUDY COURSES

Bee Keeping for Business & Pleasure

This is a home study course for anyone interested in beekeeping whether commercially or as a hobby. The course is in an easy-to-read format written by apiary advisers of NSW Dept of Agriculture and Fisheries. It includes necessary materials, audio cassettes. A 2-3 day practical school is optional. Cost \$70 including materials.

Contact: Home Study Program, C B Alexander Agricultural College, Tocal, Paterson 2421.

Business Diploma by Correspondence

As well as classic instruction, reading material and practical exercises students will receive real life consultancy services from professionally qualified tutors. The course covers such areas as Financial Management, Marketing, Law, Communications, Commerce, Office Procedures and Supervision.

Contact: John Mason, Australian Correspondence Schools, 264 Swansea Rd, Lilydale 3140.

Orange Agriculture College

Applicants to external studies programs are usually accepted in the autumn semester, February to July. Courses are available in the following areas: Farm Management, Land Management, Farm Secretarial Studies, Horticulture. These courses are also available as 2 year full-time on-campus studies. Normally off-campus students can expect to complete one of these courses in 4-6 years. Students on average attempt 2 or 3 units of study per 18 week semester. Qualified personnel are available for individual consultation.

Costs: the Government Administration Fee is compulsory \$250 per year; Student Association \$55 per semester full-time, \$25.50 per semester external studies and part-time. There may be some textbook costs, postage and stationery.

Contact: External Student Liaison Officer, PO Box 883, Orange 2800.

The College also offers a variety of short courses for rural NSW. Contact: Short Course Co-ordinator, Orange Agricultural College, PO Box 883, Orange 2800.

Horse Management

The Horse Management Course - on-campus only - is designed for those who wish to be employed at management levels, within the horse industry. Students will be trained in Horse, Stable and Stud Property Management. Practical handling and riding skills are developed over the 2 years full-time course. Students are eligible to apply for financial assistance through the Austudy scheme. Cost: residential fees for students living on campus, \$70 per week; Students Association \$55 per semester, Government Administration Fee, \$250 per year; tour fees \$25 per semester.

Contact: Orange Agricultural College, PO Box 883, Orange 2800.

INFORMATION DIRECTORIES

Horticultural Opportunities in Gippsland

Gippsland is an important horticultural area in Victoria. It offers close proximity to markets, excellent climatic conditions, good soils and a large local market. This booklet outlines many profitable opportunities for the development of new horticultural businesses and the expansion of existing ones. Pros and cons of more than 18 different crops are discussed. The reader is shown how to estimate the profitability of a crop for particular circumstances. A list of publications offering more information is also provided. Cost: \$7.00 plus \$1.50 postage.

Contact: Horticultural Opportunities in Gippsland, C/- Dept of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, 70 Smith St, Warragul 3820.

The New Age Directory Victoria 1990

Printed on 100 percent recycled paper this useful booklet provides a list of alternative products and services for environment conscious consumers and concerned citizens. Some of the many categories of listings are: Animal Welfare, Counselling, Healing, Health Foods, Massage, Natural Therapy, Stress Management. Cost: \$5 plus postage \$3 for first book \$1 per subsequent books.

Contact: Spiral, 269 Smith St, Fitzroy 3065.

Green Guide

This soft-cover booklet provides a comprehensive listing of environment and conservation contacts in the areas of government, the media, and relevant associations and lobby groups. It has been well researched and has a detailed index for easy reference. Regular updates are planned. Cost: \$55 including postage.

Contact: Margaret Gee Holdings Pty Ltd, Suite 221, Wingello House, 1-12 Angel Place, Sydney 2000.

The Blue Pages: WA's Natural Health and Lifestyle Directory.

Never before has the search for personal transformation been so intense nor so widely spread throughout the community. To cater for this search a comprehensive range of products and services is becoming increasingly available. Listed in the directory are individual teachers of personal transformation, practitioners of physical and psycho therapies and metaphysical arts, counsellors, consultants on exercise and nutrition, stress management and relaxation, plus numerous other categories of relevant products and services. *The Blue Pages* will be an introduction to an extensive network of people with mutual interests. Cost: \$4 including postage.

Contact: The Blue Pages, Freepost 10, PO Box 1190, Fremantle 6160.

Being Healthy Directory

Within this national publication of over 1000 entries can be found services, products and advice about what most people desire - being healthy. The directory is non political and unbiased, it puts people in touch with qualified practitioners, services and quality products as well as with medical practitioners who integrate mainstream and natural medicine. A comprehensive index makes using the directory simple and quick. A 'Glossary of Therapies' describes many of the different therapies available. All this combined with book reviews and informative articles on health topics makes this directory interesting, useful and good value. Cost: \$3.50, \$6.50 posted.

Contact: Fran Napier, PO Box 304, Belgrave 3160.

Organics - A Directory of Businesses and Services.

Organics has been produced by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs to assist all farmers and home gardeners who are interested in organic growing or reducing the use of synthetic chemicals. It is a directory of businesses and organisations which supply products and services suitable for use in organic production systems. Categories include: fertilisers; pest, disease and weed control; seeds and seedlings; animal husbandry; wholesalers and retailers. Cost: \$5, probably plus postage.

Contact: Organics, Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

A Guide To Organic Growing in SE Queensland and Northern NSW.

This directory is intended for those beginning to take an interest in organic growing, whether commercially or for personal use, and needing information on products, services, courses and support groups. It will also benefit people wanting to buy organic produce or those wishing to sell their produce to organic outlets. As well as the obvious category listings such as nurseries, growers and seed suppliers, you will also find listed worm suppliers, ethical investments and co-operatives. Cost: not known.

Contact: Ted Forbes, Council of Organic Growers of SE Queensland and Northern NSW, 2 Dove St, Birkdale 4159.

Other useful information on courses appears in GR 70.

IN TOUCH WITH THE EARTH

The Outdoor Way to Health

by Jose Robinson, Wild Cattle Island, Qld.

So much of modern life is spent indoors that we tend to lose contact with the earth around us – the very basis of our health and wellbeing. It may seem trite to be recommending the benefits of fresh air and exercise, but we can all do with the refreshment of deep breathing and regular outdoor activity. The benefits are spiritual as well as physical, putting us back in touch with ourselves and our natural world.

Achieving fitness and developing self-awareness should play an important part in every person's personal and working life. I make no claim to be an expert in these fields, nor do I set out to preach what one should or should not do with their own body. We are given a body to do with what we will.

To many people, exercise is simply a gruelling unpleasant chore and they prefer to claim they haven't time for it. Well, be that as it may, everyone can at least 'walk tall'. Even if it is only the few steps you may take from home to car or train, spend that short time to the best advantage. Throw your shoulders back, head up, chin in, tummy tucked in, a few deep deep breaths and 'walk tall'.

Research has shown that poor physical fitness – mostly caused by sedentary living habits nurtured in our affluent society – contributes to heart disease. For many of us, stress, anxiety and tension may be slowly taking over our lives. Of course there is no overnight miracle cure for these things, but at least we can try to get ourselves started on the right track to beat these problems by thinking exercise, deep breathing and walking tall.

Relaxation is a skill that needs the help and co-operation of both mind and muscles. We have to be willing to make an effort. Our judgement is clouded if we are emotional. If things seem like becoming too much to handle, remove yourself immediately from the situation. Walk around the office, out of the room, around the house, around the yard, around the block or wherever. But walk, and 'walk tall'. Fill your chest cavity, your lungs with clean air. The stress or problems won't disappear like magic, but at least when you come back, your spirits and certainly your body will feel a little better.

When you walk, make sure your weight is evenly distributed as you move. If you are walking correctly, your shoes will be evenly worn on the soles as well as the heels. Your arms should swing gently and naturally as you move. Practise in front of a mirror, or when you see your reflection in a shop window. Concentrate on training your body to move in even natural steps. Try walking a straight line along a footpath. Walking is free, if you walk really briskly you are working the abdominal muscles, the hips, feet and legs. If you walk after a meal it aids digestion, increases metabolism and serves as a natural tranquilliser. Feel your energy soar as you breathe deeply, and 'walk tall'.

Try and think of walking as an enjoyment rather than an exercise to be endured. It can be fun and even social if you so desire. Sometimes it takes every bit of discipline you can muster. It is not important to walk on the fast track, but walk



Walking in bare feet is a wonderful way to renew earthly contact. Give your body as much freedom as possible to enjoy the benefits of deep breathing and open space.

on your own pace track. You will soon have increased feelings of vitality, alertness and confidence.

If you normally sit at an office desk all day and stare at the television all night, you're asking for trouble. Get up, get out, and get walking... 'walk tall'. Your body stops working efficiently if it doesn't have some exercise. The muscles become flabby and weak, particularly around the stomach and leg area. Walking tall can give you a greater feeling of well being, which in turn directs you to a more positive attitude towards life. Walking can help you to overcome tension, irritability, apathy and sluggishness. You feel better and you look better when you 'walk tall'.

One of the main beauties of walking is that it can fit into any routine. You can walk on the street, on the beach, in the bush, even just around your own yard. Each time you walk, make it a personal challenge and triumph. Walk because you look and feel good. Walk because it calms and exhilarates you. It's never too late to improve if you sincerely want to! 'Walk tall'!

If your practical soul rebels at the idea of exercise for its own sake, why not direct your efforts to a productive end – spend your time in the garden and reap the rewards of increased wellbeing as well as fresh vegies and flowers. Get a

little dirt on your hands (feet, knees, backside) and re-establish your links with the rhythm of nature.

While I mainly speak for myself on the therapeutic advantages gardening has to offer, I firmly believe that most of us have the need for some regular non-competitive earthly contact. In today's stressful world, many people, particularly city people, have forgotten or have never experienced how to make the most of our outside environment. Whether we like it or not, society sets competitive standards in culture, academics, sporting activity and living in general. If we can just organise our lives to spend some regular time to catch up on the therapeutic importance of contact with the earth, the resulting breath of fresh air is worth a fortune in restorative value.

Gardening is an art form to be enjoyed at all levels. Whether it be planting seedlings, potting cuttings, tending flowers, vegetables or trees, simply walking through botanical gardens or sitting relaxing watching the birds and butterflies, it all has very pleasant and peaceful connotations. A garden may well consist of merely half a dozen potted plants on a balcony, yet it can give similar satisfaction and therapeutic value as acres of lovingly tended garden area.

Human beings need to renew earthly contact from time to time, and what better way could there be than being in touch with the earth through a garden. Gardening can be a highly sensitive and though provoking pastime and has interconnection with other aspects of culture. It can proceed from the spiritual health of a person. The healing or refreshing of the human spirit is a similar process to that of tending the soil. It must be done gently and with love.

Many people are put off from starting a garden because they think it will be a lot of hard work and maintenance. It does not have to be so. With a natural practical approach, an organic garden can become a great joy and satisfaction. My own garden has grown like Topsy. It has expanded and contracted over the years as my available time and inclination have fluctuated. Initially I despaired of ever having success in results from my vegetable garden. My soil is pure sand on the beachfront of a small sand island. But with importing small quantities of soil from the mainland from time to time, composting, mulching and adding seaweed, it has begun to respond favourably. It gives me much pleasure and spiritual regeneration.

Books like *Harvesting the Suburbs* by Jeff Hedges, *The One-Straw Revolution* by Masanobu Fukuoka, and of course years of studying the wonderful articles in *Grass Roots* have all been instrumental in the building up of my garden. It has been the excellent helpful information from these books, plus many others, that has given me encouragement to plough on (pardon the pun).

My ever lovin' has, at long last, set up an automatic watering system for the main section of my garden. This will now enable me to return from a few weeks trip away on our boat to find plants alive and well, instead of suffering the previous disastrous fatality toll. The watering system operates on our 12 volt set-up and can be programmed for various periods throughout the day, depending on water supply. We operate completely on solar and wind energy, and have only rain water backed up by a windmill which can pump for short periods from a small underground soak, so we have to be fairly careful with water. Sandy soil, not having much holding power, has to be

heavily mulched in order to retain moisture so I need a constant mulching programme.

A fourteen-day compost drum is a continual must in my gardening plan of action. The contents to be composted usually consist of three parts grass clippings, one part seaweed, one part sawdust and one part poultry manure which acts as the main catalyst. This is all put into a fifty litre drum set up on a stand with a turning handle. The contents need to be tightly packed with no air space. As long as the drum is turned at least once daily for the two weeks, the results at the end of this time consist of lush friable sweet smelling organic fertiliser ready to be added to the garden immediately. Then the whole cycle begins again. Once the compost is spread on top of the garden between the plants, I top it up with hay to retain the moisture.

Even as I sit at my typewriter composing this article, the urge is upon me to wander out to my garden to revamp my spirit by contact with the soil. No matter what ails me from time to time, if I can manage to make a sojourn outdoors for a little while, any burdens seem to disappear like magic. The marvellous therapeutic effort of a stint of 'walking tall' or gardening tends to be both a physical and mental healer. The clouds roll away and the sun shines in once again.

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YOU WOULDN'T CREDIT IT!

by John Ford, Atherton, Qld.

Although the effort of saving for that block of land is probably the one common goal many of us share, getting there can be frustrated by unexpected obstacles. Our quest for more control over our lives can meet opposition in many forms – building inspectors, councils, bank managers, even our friends. However there is yet another area of potential trouble of which many are totally unaware.

Leah and I are saving towards a more self-sufficient lifestyle, and made our initial requirement to get out of debt and from then on remain debt-free. We achieved this goal some two years ago. However, as with the best laid plans there came a time for modification. This happened when our faithful vehicle came to the end of its cost effectiveness, and we had the opportunity of purchasing another vehicle better suited to our needs.

We were reluctant to break into our hard earned savings (something we had to do anyway as events evolved). Instead we approached our local bank manager for the modest amount required, \$2500. As we both had good jobs, ample savings and no debts, we anticipated little difficulty. You can imagine our surprise when told that the loan had been rejected because of a bad credit record. What unfolded was our initiation into the other side of a society living on debt, the credit reference reporting business – an area of life of which we were unaware, but which can have sinister repercussions for the unwary.

To untangle the web of bureaucratic red tape took us eleven months, involved the writing of untold letters, telephone calls (all at peak rates), anguish and emotional energy. Had it not been for confidence in ourselves in ‘taking charge of our lives’ (GR 70), and reading about others in *Grass Roots* who had successfully tackled the status quo, we would have wilted under the pressure. However the lessons learnt concerning the credit reference reporting business convinced us that it is probably wise for all of us to be conversant with its operations and how it may affect our daily lives.

We generally accept that there is a right for those extending credit to have access to reliable information concerning those who are borrowing. We also accept that this information is accurate and handled in a responsible manner. The reality is that neither assumption is correct. It appears that the credit reference reporting business is designed to assist big business to collect outstanding debt, the same debt it has so easily granted with little concern for the borrower’s capacity to repay. It is, as we uncovered, concerned neither with accuracy nor responsibility.

On learning of our loan being refused, we talked to the local bank manager who knew of our situation and advised us to pursue the matter. Apart from him, we were well and truly on our own. First we had to address a letter to him asking why the loan was refused. An ‘official’ reply was returned, stating that the loan was refused because of a credit report. Under Queensland law (I do not know about other states) we had 14 days in which to request the name and address of the agent who made the report. We followed the rules, and were duly advised

by letter that the report had been made by a credit reference organisation in Brisbane.

Armed with this information, I rang their consumer relations department, and let loose my frustrations. Silly me. All I achieved was an increase in the phone bill. A better approach would have been to write, requesting a copy of our file. I was advised that a copy cost \$5, a fee to which I objected, apparently successfully, for our file arrived three weeks later, together with a bundle of explanatory notes; and promotional material explaining how the organisation was doing such a great job protecting the consumer’s interests.

Before the arrival of our file, in fact within 4 days of applying for the loan, we received a sharply worded letter of demand threatening legal action from Telecom. Apparently a \$64 bill had not been forwarded to us at our new address following our moving from one part of the state to another. Unable to locate us, Telecom simply recorded the payment default with the credit organisation without our knowledge. However at the time of notifying them of this dastardly deed, we were already on the phone at our new address. All Telecom had to do was consult its own telephone service in order to find our new address. So much for accuracy.

We now began learning some uncomfortable lessons concerning the operations of the credit reference business. If you thought the likes of banks, building societies, credit unions and hire purchase companies make up their memberships then, like us, you are in for a surprise. Listed along with Telecom at this particular one is a major department store, so one can reasonably assume that the membership list is extensive; it includes government departments so we are forgiven if we assume police agencies in all their guises also have access. Unsolicited credit, as with Telecom, automatically means you are placed on record with these organisations. So if you are debt free and have a telephone, you also have a file number open to access by an unknown multitude of organisations. The only requirements placed on prospective members are that they are a registered company or business dealing in services or credit provision, and that they pay a fee of about \$150 per year. Thus, electrical boards, gas companies, local authorities, even the QATB, all have the criteria to be members. In fact the local garage where you book up fuel meets these requirements. Apart from accepting what is recorded on Corporate Affairs files, this business does not carry out any further checks to ascertain the bona fides of members. When I spoke to the membership supervisor, I was informed that the only consumer safeguard is for heavy penalties under the Privacy Amendment Act for ‘knowingly’ providing false information.

What information is recorded on file? On our copy, the information includes the ‘subject’s’ full name and file number, spouse’s full name and date of birth, drivers license number, employers present and past, what those jobs were and dates, your address, and at least two previous addresses, any aliases or other names. Credit details include amount, date and lending organisation, type of loan and reference number. In the case of

Telecom the reference number happens to be your telephone number. Thus it is a quite extensive dossier.

When we set out to correct this obvious injustice, we found the going difficult, despite the promotional hype put out by the credit agency. It was a bit like catching smoke. Three letters to Telecom remain unanswered, and letters to the ombudsman, the head office of the bank concerned, the Federal Opposition, the ABC *Investigators* program all failed to generate any assistance. However we maintained our resolve and kept asking questions. If there's one thing bureaucracy hates, it's having its own disinformation being returned in question form. Finally it accepted the truth of its own evidence, and in a letter tinged with reluctance agreed to correct an obvious injustice.

There are however some disturbing facts concerning the operation of the credit reference reporting business. In the second of two letters, the Federal Minister for Telecommunications and Aviation Support outlined the reasons for Telecom's action. In the minister's words, 'The administrative effort involved in pursuing relatively small amounts did not warrant exhaustive checks and as a result the matter was referred to (the credit reference agency)'. Obviously we needed to have an even larger bill before Telecom made exhaustive checks like consulting a telephone book, or calling 013. If this organisation can be used in such a cavalier fashion by Telecom, what of all the other thousands of members in Australia? So much for responsibility.

The most disturbing feature of this business is the fact that subjects cannot initiate any action concerning the accuracy of their files. Should you dispute the recording of the default, all that is recorded is the fact that such record is in dispute. In addition, when the outstanding amount is paid, that is exactly what is recorded, along with the date. If you require anything to be deleted from your file this must be done by the organisation who made the default payment report, in our case Telecom. The only information deleted from a subject's file is his record of credit information, and this only after 5 years.

A few tips. Some of these organisations accept no responsibility in ascertaining the accuracy of the information they place on file. We were perhaps fortunate. What if the organisation who made the default report refused to inform the credit agency of the correction? What if they had gone bankrupt? Presumably the default would remain forever on file, thereby limiting access to credit. Keep records of all correspondence. This is essential. Some of the return replies had little or nothing to do with the original letter. Politicians are not the only ones versed in gobblegook. Continue to ask specific questions. Be persistent and seek further clarification if you are not satisfied or unable to understand. Remember you are dealing with people; people who in the quiet of the night probably wish they had the courage to take charge of their lives, who deep down hate what they are doing, but have not found the will to cast off the fetters of the consumer society. Your letters may have some influence. Be firm but polite, express facts not feelings. It may be your letter that chinks the armour that will lead to a questioning of their lives, and another individual is converted to grass roots thinking.

RUST MARKS ON WOOLLENS

Treat with lemon juice, vinegar or diluted oxalic acid. Rinse well, then wash in the normal way.

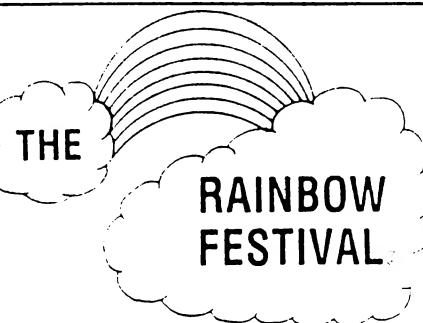
BOOKS ON COLOURED SHEEP

Since we mentioned at the end of Brenda Phillis' article ('Catching Sheep Without a Sheepdog', GR 75, p. 21) that the SA Coloured Sheep Owners' Society had for sale books on the subject, several readers have ordered copies. However, SACSOS have advised us that most do not realise the high cost of postage. *Breeding Coloured Sheep and Using Coloured Wool* weighs 520 g packed and costs \$3.00-\$4.05 to post in SA, and \$4.35-\$8.10 interstate, with packing costs extra. *Moorit Sheep in Australia* costs \$0.80-\$1.00 to post, but both together can be sent for the cost of the larger book. When ordering the books (priced at \$3.50 and \$2.50) from SACSOS, PO Box 110, Eastwood 5063, please include sufficient money to cover these postage and packing costs.

ECOLOGICAL ILLNESS

Victims of 'sick building syndrome' no longer brush off the maladies this condition causes. Increased awareness of the syndrome has caused a rush to the courts. The legal ramifications can affect manufacturers, wholesalers, contractors, home sellers, builders, brokers, architects, engineers and employers. Such litigation has become so common that a US attorney has added a subspecialty to his personal injury/workers' compensation law practice - ecological illness injury cases. Sick building syndrome is thought to be caused by inadequate air changes that allow indoor pollutants to build up.

Consumer Union News Digest, USA, Feb 1, 89.



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Natural Cosmetics

by Bush Apothecary, Bonang, Vic.

Page 11 in GR 69 had a request for feedback on natural cosmetics. Here is a recipe for skin lotion/cleansing milk, basically derived from a *Choice* magazine (December 1986) suggestion that 20-25 percent sorbolene solution constituted an economical and effective 'skin care moisturiser'. We have progressed from that to developing our own recipe, as follows. When buying the ingredients you should keep in mind that some sorbolene lotions on the market are as low as 0.84 percent Ceta macrogol emuls wax. Only 'sorbolene cream' of at least 14 percent Ceta macrogol emuls wax should be used in our recipe, and in preference the sorbolene cream without glycerine. We prefer to add our own 10 percent glycerine and feel we get a better result.

250 g (8 oz) sorbolene (half a 500 g jar from the chemist)
35-50 g (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 oz) lanoline (or a substitute, available from chemist)
25 g (1 oz) glycerine (optional)
50 ml (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ fl oz) corn, maize, grapeseed or sunflower oil
50 ml (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ fl oz) olive oil
25 ml ($\frac{1}{8}$ fl oz) almond oil
10 ml ($\frac{1}{3}$ fl oz) tea tree oil
3 ml ($\frac{1}{10}$ fl oz) lavender oil
1 ml ($\frac{1}{30}$ fl oz) rose oil

We find the best way to make this up is to reuse old sorbolene jars because of the tight seal screw tops. Wash them thoroughly, sterilise with methylated spirits and drain on a clean towel.

Fold lanoline and glycerine into the sorbolene with a 25 mm (1 in) wide wooden spatula. Work the corn, olive and almond oils into this mixture until smooth, then do the same with the tea tree, lavender and rose oils. This results in a cream with what we believe to be fairly mild antiseptic and healing properties for minor cuts, softening scabs, etc.

You'll now have approximately 100 ml (4 fl oz) space above the smooth cream. Add 100 ml (4 fl oz) cold, boiled water. Replace cap firmly so it will not leak (if you overtighten it will leak). Place your finger over the cap so it will not shake off and shake it vigorously! This is pretty good exercise. If you object to this strenuous shaking the water can be stirred in with the spatula, but it is slower and perhaps not as effective. Personally we find a good shake to be a great loosening up exercise. Carefully unscrew the cap and decant half into a second jar. Top up with cold boiled water, replace caps firmly and shake both jars. If you haven't managed to shake off the caps and cover yourself, your environment and partner with the mixture, you should now be in possession of one litre (1 $\frac{2}{3}$ pt) of skin lotion.

Up till now we have found the lotion to set overnight or firm up somewhat. Since you have 250 g (8 oz) of sorbolene in 1000 ml (1 $\frac{2}{3}$ pt), your solution with respect to sorbolene is 250/1000 weight/volume or 25/100 w/v or 25% w/v. To make a skin milk/cleansing milk you can dilute this solution progressively. Below 20 percent however you may experience separation of oils and water, so go easy. Suppose that two days after making

it up you find it too stiff to decant. Replace cap firmly and shake. Now you may pour half into another jar, add 125 ml (4 fl oz) of cold boiled water to 250 ml (8 fl oz) of lotion, replace cap and shake. You now have 375 ml (12 fl oz) of skin milk cleanser/moisturiser.

Tea tree oil will be active up to 1 part in 200, and is mildly antiseptic and effective against pimples, bites, scratches, thrush and minor inflammation. To moisten the fingers lightly with tea tree oil and augment the lotion on the skin inflammation may help improve itches and skin irritations. We found straight tea tree oil too harsh, but lightly applied over the lotion very effective indeed.

You will find the lotion an excellent lubricant for massage. Once applied it can be kept moist with a little water on the fingertips. You may be horrified when using it to find how much dirt can be present in 'clean skin'.

Those of you who are possessed of sensitive skins that react violently to sandfly, mosquito and even dustmite might like to try eucalyptus oil applied to affected areas. Eucalyptus oil used before the 'bities' can get you is good too. In case of tired aching joints and muscles you may find this oil also beneficial as a rub, but make sure you keep it away from eyes and other tender areas and mucus membranes like the lips as it can blister those areas.

Observe strict asepsis with utensils by sterilising with methylated spirits: jars, measuring cylinders, pipettes and spatula - we made our own spatula by whittling a piece of swamp gum (*E. ovata* or *E. camphora*) firewood kindling and sanding it. Although tea tree oil is a good antiseptic and fungicide some moulds and fungi utilise free radicals on their periphery and can thus survive and multiply. Ensure clean utensils, absolute alcohol (meth spirits), and dust free environments and you can make this preparation satisfactorily.

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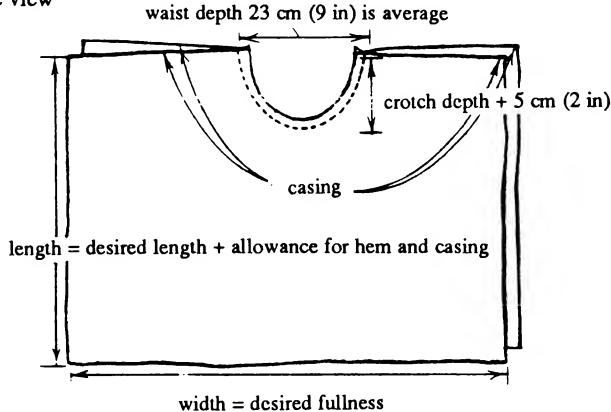
Wraparound Pants

by Mary Sweeney, Yagoona, NSW.

Here's a garment that's quick to make, versatile and attractive. It's nothing more than two rectangular pieces of cloth stitched only at the U-shaped crotch. Finish with two drawstring casings, one at the front and one at the back, and put it on by tying the front drawstring behind and the back drawstring around the front so that you have overlapping side openings.

You can vary the length and the fabric so that the pants are suitable for either casual or formal wear. With very sheer material it is advisable to stitch on lining and turn right side out before you cut the crotch and make the facings, so that the

Side view

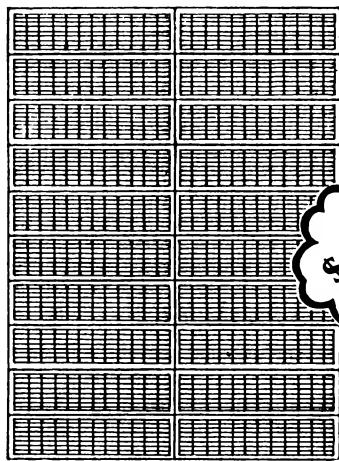


hems and sides are already finished. Another variation is to gather the waistlines onto a band with a fancy fastener – and there are lots more possibilities.

Finished garment



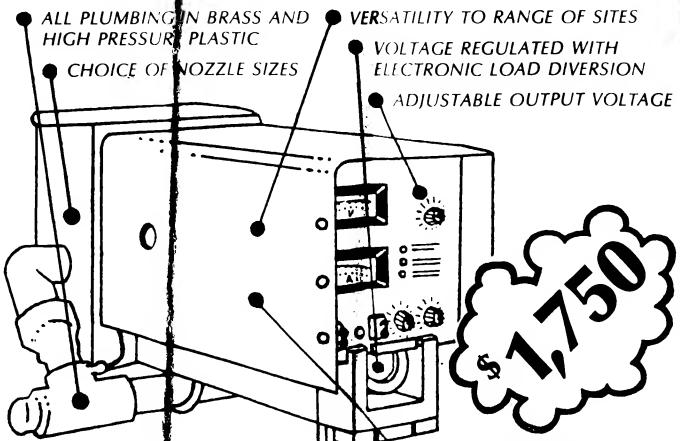
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BASIC LESSONS IN BUYING GOATS

by J C Holman, Kiama, NSW.

Perhaps the school of hard knocks is the surest teacher for beginners in the task of selecting and buying their first goat, but a great deal of pain can be avoided if we listen to the experience of others. If I had received the helping hand of experience in starting with dairy goats things would have been more simple. However, from the hard knocks I received I have learned ten basic lessons in buying goats that should be helpful to others.

There was a time when I did not know about the things listed below, and the breeders with whom I came in contact when looking for stock certainly did not mention them to me. I guess it's not a good idea to pick out the faults of a goat when showing her to a prospective buyer – it's not a good idea if you want to stay in business. Of course, I believe the animal should be in perfect health before she is offered for sale, but it's the buying end I want to talk about.

POINTS TO WATCH

- Buy your goat from a reputable breeder – it's usually safest to buy from those who advertise regularly, for putting their stock into the spotlight through advertising pretty much automatically removes the shady dealing which may cover the less well-known breeders. Look at the goat many times. If there is nothing the matter with her the seller won't mind.
- Milk her yourself, or be on hand at milking time (if she is fresh). Drink a big glassful of her milk, or take some home.
- Look at her surroundings. See that she has been raised in the same clean conditions that you intend to provide for her. See that the rest of the herd is clean and healthy.

• Inspect her coat. If she is in good health it will be glossy and smooth. Look closely for lice.

• Look at her skin. Beware of sores. Dandruff is not an indication of skin health – it is probably not serious, but let the breeder clean the goat up first.

• Feel the udder after the doe has been milked. Look for hard places, warts, sores, deformities, scars (from injuries). Milk a few squirts from each teat to be sure she milks easily and that there is but one stream of milk – a spraying teat or one with more than one orifice can be quite a bother.

• Look at the hoofs. If she has been well cared for they will be in good shape. Make her walk around the lot. Does she limp? If so, beware – there's something wrong.

• Examine her ears. Be sure there are no sores, scabs or scales. A sore ear is hard to see unless you turn it inside out and look well.

• Be sure and feel under her jaw. Look for lumps, knots, any growth under the skin.

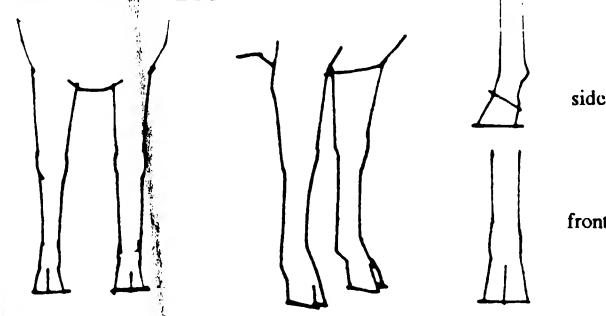
• Examine her registration papers, if any. Know as much as you can of her parentage and ancestry.

Now to tell the truth, I have never seen a goat with all the faults that are listed. But I would never buy a goat that had any of them. This is a starter. Use your common sense on other points, and you'll be reasonably sure of getting good value when you buy.

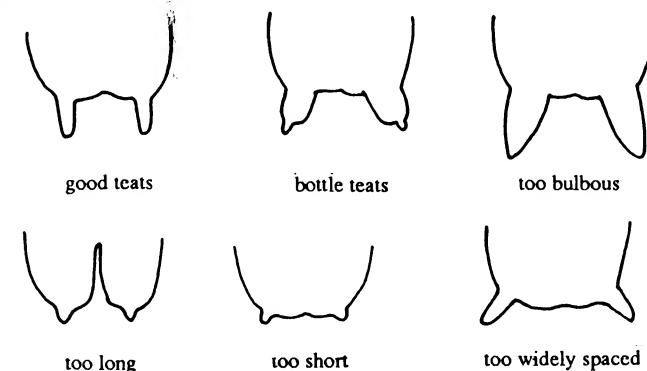
Reprinted from *The Australian Goat World*, April 1959, Dairy Goat Society of Australia, PO Box 189, Kiama 2533.

Conformation of the dairy goat

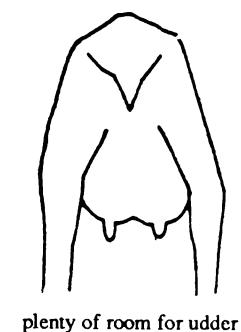
IDEAL FRONT LEGS



TEATS



IDEAL BACK LEGS



BAD BACK LEGS

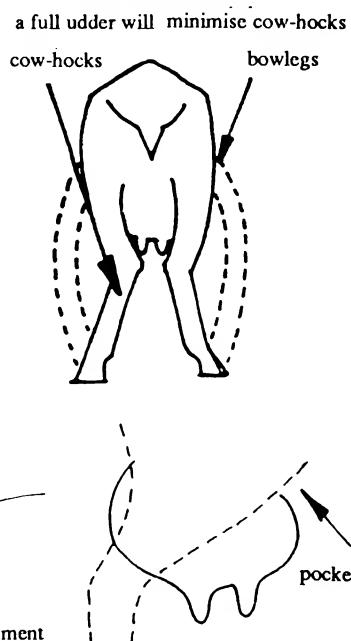


Illustration taken from *Australian Goat Husbandry* by Pat Coleby, a book which provides a complete guide to the care and management of goats. Price is \$10.95 posted from Night Owl Publishers, PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

RIBBON PATCHWORK

by Sally Norman, Frankston, Vic.

Ribbon patchwork is a craft that even the uncreative can have lots of fun with and it does not require experience or professional skills. It is ideal for cushion covers, place mats or for bibs and pockets on littlies' clothes.

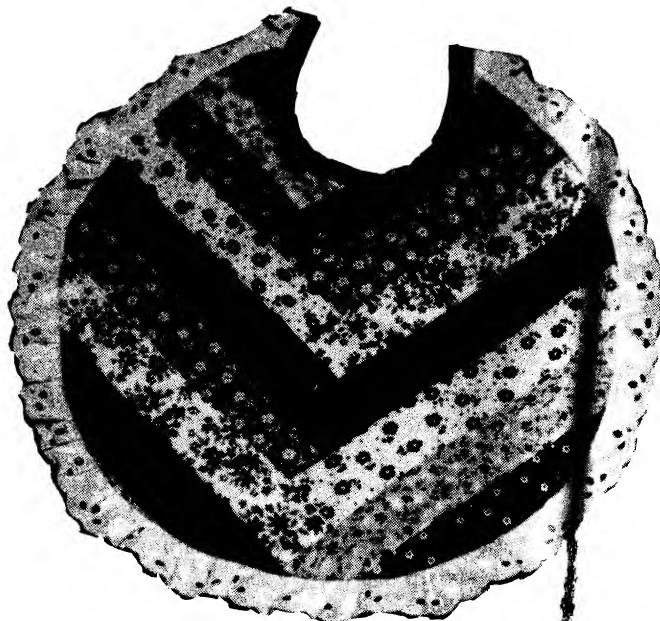
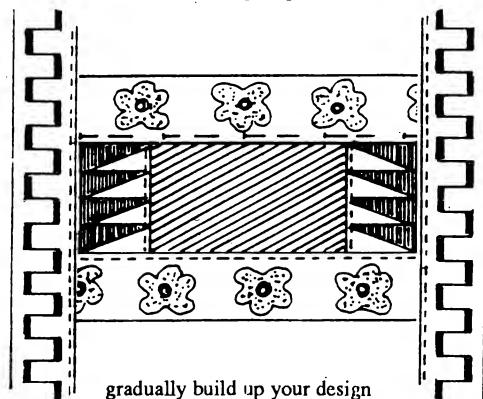
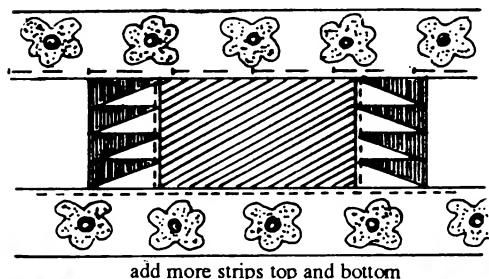
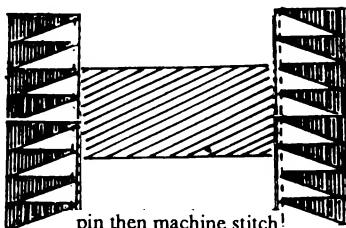
MATERIALS REQUIRED

A collection of bias binding is invaluable. If you are a bower bird, or your mother is, you may already have access to cards of this, either in plain colours or checks. Bias is available in several widths so obtain a variety if you can. Lengths of ribbon remnants are also essential and may be obtained at little cost. You can also make your own trimmings from leftover lengths of material.

RECTANGULAR RIBBON PATCHWORK

This is easy to start with and I suggest you set yourself a project, say perhaps a table mat. Choose a piece of fabric for the centre – it doesn't have to be a trim and I've found it easier to begin with a design from a piece of curtain fabric about the size of a paperback book. Take a strip of the wide bias and pin on the left edge of your design, cut, then pin a piece the same length on the right edge. Machine in place. Next take a length of ribbon

Step by step ribbon patchwork



A simple toddler's bib made from fabric strips using the ribbon patchwork technique.

or bias and run it along the top and then the bottom of the design, machining close to the edge. It is now just a matter of slowly building up your ribbon patchwork until you reach the size you desire.

Some people when creating this patchwork use a backing, say lawn, and pin and sew the trims to it. If you are just beginning or you want a backing on your work then this is an excellent way of working.

Iron your trims before you start and press the emerging patchwork as it develops. This will help eliminate puckering. If you are not confident of your sewing ability take a little extra time and tack the trims in place, then use this thread as a guide line for your sewing. It will sit flatter and be easier to sew if it is pressed before machining.

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STAMPING OUT WHITE ANTS

by Cleo James, Elaine, Vic.

In a recent edition of *Grass Roots* (No 72) I saw two requests for information on white ants. I imagine that most home owners and builders would also be interested in this subject, so I felt motivated to put down some information which has come my way. I am naturally interested in this subject as it came within the range of my most recent profession which was basically the restoration of houses, with Victorian ones being my particular speciality. I don't have an opinion backed by formal qualifications, but in the course of my work have had occasion to research the subject and have since had my information verified by a licensed pest exterminator (including the lime treatment which will appear later). The problem is a significant one which can cause huge expense and my responsibility to my clients is taken very seriously.

Firstly, white ants are in fact termites and not ants at all! The resemblance to ants is that, like ants, they form colonies with a queen whose primary function is to lay eggs. There are attendants to the queen, others to take the eggs into the incubator chambers and yet others to look after the eggs. There is an entire hierarchy involved, with the workers taking up the last line – they're the ones that cause the damage to our property and the most concern to us in the immediate term. They are an insidious lot of little buggers whose nest can be situated quite some distance from their work site or food source. They are also great workers and seem to rejoice in the construction of tunnels or galleries through which they commute to their target.

Moisture is essential to their existence. It's true that exposure to daylight, and particularly sunlight, causes their death. I understand that this is because the membrane that encases their bodies is especially sensitive to changes in the moisture content, such that even a brief exposure causes their demise. In order to exist termites therefore need a reliable source of moisture, a dark environment and a food source, such as is essential to any form of life.

These facts give us a few clues. If one were to allow a source of moisture into a wall or floor e.g. a leaking plumbing fitting either into or onto a wall, a leaking roof or flashing or a gutter in need of replacement – especially if said leaks lead into masonry in old buildings where moisture can be retained for months on end – whole colonies can set up business quite remote from the surrounding earth i.e. within the building itself!

Termites can enter a house or building via any part which is in contact with the earth. On occasion they've bridged ant-capping with a gallery which is easily recognisable if access to the under-floor is available. I've seen 'galleries' constructed up and along the inside walls of masonry buildings to gain access to floor levels above. I recently read of a situation where a concrete slab had to be excavated and redone. The evidence exposed indicated that the termites had in fact eaten holes in the plastic damp-course to gain entry to the structure. Whether you like it or not, some treatment under slabs is necessary! Termites have been seen to emerge through unbelievably thin cracks in concrete slabs and masonry.

What are the answers to the little invaders? Physically destroying the nest is one way – only you must be sure that the queen is destroyed. This method, however, is not very practical

as another colony can be established in the area; or the survivors – and some are likely – can create a new queen, by a process of which I'm unsure. Another method which can be carried out only by a licensed pest controller and which is acceptable to few people is to 'puff' some arsenic powder into the discovered but undisturbed work area (if disturbed they usually vacate post-haste and re-establish elsewhere, particularly if the area is exposed to light). In the case of arsenic the workers are contaminated and carry it back to their nest, where they are 'cleaned' both entering and leaving. The poison then travels down the entire food chain, and termites in that situation can now be considered to be history.

On the brighter side, there are precautions that one can take. Builders lime – cheap as chips – is very effective against termites. It should be sprinkled into and around footings immediately before the membrane is placed prior to laying a concrete slab. The principle is to create a continuous barrier with the lime. If access can be gained to underfloor areas in existing homes, the same treatment can be effective there also. I can't think of any reason that the lime couldn't be mixed with water and sprayed. I'd suggest that the volume of water be such that at least the first 50-100 mm (2-4 in) of the surface is left moistened. Builders lime is also called slaked lime (calcium hydroxide, or hydrated calcium oxide), somewhat different from the crushed limestone (calcium carbonate) usually used in the garden to reduce soil acidity, though the latter may work as well – I'm not sure of this.

. Drainage is of paramount importance to any dwelling, affecting the very integrity of your home, particularly in reactive soils (largely clays). These soils can expand dramatically with the introduction of moisture (and dryness for shrinkage in same), causing movement in the foundations with predictable results. Gutters should be kept clean and in good repair (half of the gutters in the place I recently acquired were actually graded the wrong way), the same applying to roofs and flashings. Ensure positive drainage away from the house for stormwater. Gardens should not be established around the perimeter of the house as their water requirement helps provide an environment conducive to termite activity. Such gardens also have other possible effects – like blotting out light to underfloor areas and again contributing to the termite environment. The same can be said of obstructing underfloor ventilation which is essential to the integrity of the building. Your underfloor areas should also be kept clear of garbage and particularly of wooden building materials, as should the area immediately around your house. Incidentally, this is all basic stuff in the interests of fire prevention.

I hope that I've provided at least the basics for discouraging or dealing with the little offenders in a way that is sympathetic to our environment.

NO-MILDEW SHOWER CURTAIN

To prevent mildew soak a new shower curtain in a strong solution of salt and water before hanging. For a curtain already affected by mildew, rub it well with bicarbonate of soda before washing.

TERMITES STRIKE A NEW BARRIER

Tougher restrictions on the use of the insecticide heptachlor have spurred renewed interest in alternative methods of termite protection. The development in Hawaii of a non-chemical basalt barrier may provide an effective defence for householders against termites. It is said to offer permanent, low cost protection against the highly destructive insects.

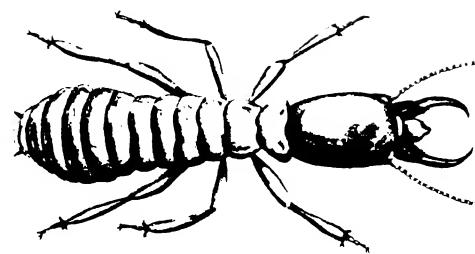
WA Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare staff are currently liaising with the CSIRO in Melbourne to confirm the basalt barrier's suitability in Australian conditions. They predict the barrier could be available to home builders within six months. Peter Dingle, a consultant with the Department, says he is confident the Hawaiian company's claims of having a cheap, effective barrier against termites will be backed up by CSIRO tests. He estimates that the cost to the owner of an average-sized house in WA would be around \$1000. Mr Dingle says this compares well with existing chemical alternatives to heptachlor which are less effective and therefore require more frequent applications.

The government has imposed tough new restrictions on the use of the long-lasting chemical heptachlor in WA because it poses potential hazards to the environment and to human beings. At the same time, the government has agreed to ban heptachlor in the control of argentine ants. Coincidentally, it was a decision by the State Health Department in Hawaii to impose a ban on heptachlor that sparked renewed interest in the basalt barrier. Work by scientists in the late 1940s unearthed strong promise for the non-chemical barrier but with widespread use of the organochlorine group of chemicals, which includes heptachlor, that early research was eventually discontinued. Now the technique has been perfected and is on Hawaii's list of approved alternatives to heptachlor in the control of termites. It has also received the thumbs up from the Building Industry Association of Hawaii as an acceptable option for both builders and new home buyers.

The 100 mm (4 in) thick basalt barrier is laid between the ground and the concrete slab of a house. It has proved impenetrable to attack because each basalt particle is of a uniquely effective size, shape and weight: termites find the basalt particles too large and heavy to carry, too small to create gaps through which to penetrate and too hard to chew.

A spokesperson for the Hawaiian developer explained that basalt gravel between 1.7 and 2.4 mm ($\frac{6}{100}$ – $\frac{9}{100}$ in) stopped the termites because the particles were too large and too heavy for the termites to carry away but were small enough so that, in packing, they created no continuous passages through the barrier. Layers composed of irregular particles larger than 2.4 mm ($\frac{9}{100}$ in) were penetrated in a matter of minutes since the termites were able to just walk through the gaps, and layers composed of particles smaller than 1.7 mm ($\frac{6}{100}$ in) were penetrated by the termites carrying the individual particles away. The loose way in which the basalt barrier was packed, however, allowed the gravel to shift and close any gaps that may have been started by the termites. Moreover, the termites were not able to chew their way through as they do with hairline cracks in concrete because the basalt gravel is too hard.

To be effective, the basalt barrier must completely isolate the concrete slab from the earth – including the sides. That



means a narrow 'moat' of basalt must ring the edge of each house. Home owners cannot, however, put any soil over the moat since this could provide termites with a bridgehead bypassing the basalt barrier altogether. But according to Mr Dingle, this is a small price for home owners to pay for total protection against termites.

And with WA's plentiful supply of granite – a mineral with the same properties as basalt – home owners can look forward to a cheap and effective weapon in the fight against termites.

Reprinted from *Safetyline*, a publication produced by the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare of WA, PO Box 294, West Perth 6005.

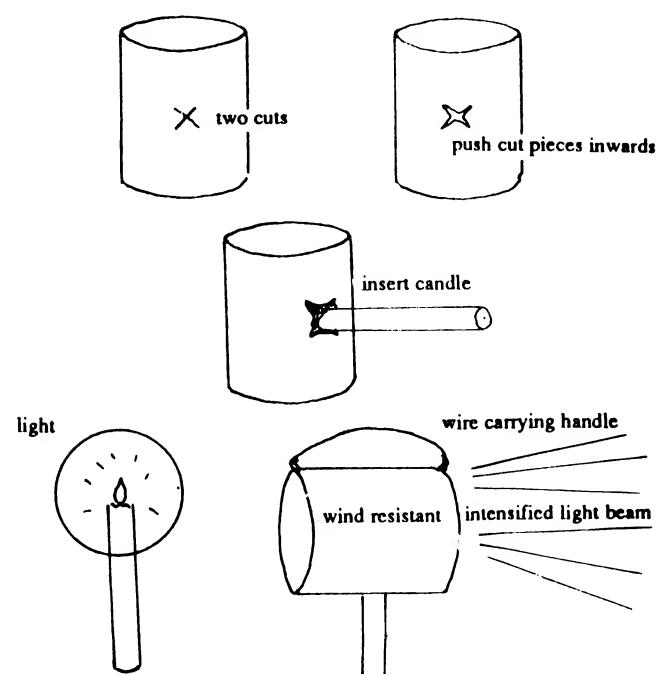
The termite illustration is taken from *Organic Control of Household Pests* by Jackie French, published by Aird Books, Flemington 3031 and available at most bookstores. This excellent little book contains several pages on termites – understanding them, prevention and control measures both before and after building and eradication measures.

THE BUSHMAN'S BUG

by Fred Harmer, Woodburn, NSW.

Here's a handy homemade torch (good for those midnight trips to the dummy, to stop you falling into the compost heap or down the well).

medium sized tin can, shiny inside



KIT HOMES

Owner-Builder's Dream or Rip-Off?

by Sylvia Lebkowski, Dunolly, Vic.



It was supposed to take eight weeks to finish -- but ended up taking more than eight months!

Their designs and features are numerous, they are advertised by many different companies throughout Australia and they appear to be an economical investment. They are kit homes, but are they really all they're cracked up to be? Our experience in building our own kit home was disheartening and expensive and the house that was supposed to take eight weeks to finish took eight months to become just livable and after one year is still not completely finished. Anyone contemplating building a kit home should do their homework and evaluate the pros and cons.

Different companies offer various package deals so it is essential to examine all details to ensure that you know exactly what you will get. For example, homes that are delivered with pre-fabricated frames save time and expense, whereas if you receive just a pile of unmarked timber, as we did, hours will be wasted sorting it out and constructing wall frames. This could prove costly if you are unable to complete the job yourself and need to enlist the help of a builder. Unfortunately, approximately one-third of our frame material was missing and a further percentage was warped and had to be replaced -- an extra time delay and something we hadn't counted on happening.

Delays and unexpected costs can arise at any stage of building; with damaged or broken materials, for example, windows, roofing; shortage in delivery, perhaps verandah decking; or through the need of outside assistance, such as the services of a qualified plumber to erect guttering and install hot water pipes. For the inexperienced owner-builder these types of problems may never have been considered prior to signing the contract and handing over thousands of dollars.

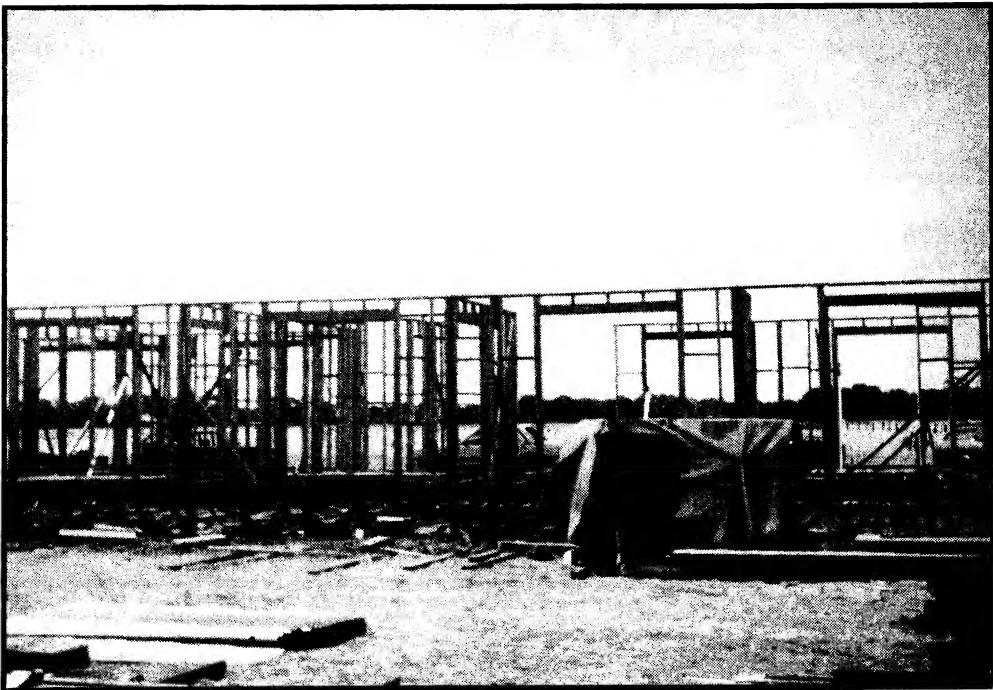
Another point to be considered is that kit homes when

completed are just empty shells requiring all interior fittings -- bathtub, toilet, shower recess, sinks, kitchen cupboards and benches, floor coverings etc -- which can prove very costly to buy. Add to these the cost of installation, either by a plumber or cabinet maker and you can count on parting with several more thousand dollars.

Many people intending to build in the country fall into the trap (as we did) of believing that a kit home is a cheap, easy



At the beginning -- the stumps in and a pile of unmarked timber under the tree which took us hours to sort out.



Above: We found it extremely frustrating to have built to this stage and then have to stand by for several months to await replacement of materials, a problem we hadn't thought of let alone allowed time for.

Below: The house was livable at eight months but of course it took many more months to properly finish off all the other 101 little jobs.



do-it-yourself form of housing that can be constructed on a block of land with a minimum of fuss and expense. However in more isolated areas a major and unexpected outlay may be electricity connection. Even though areas may claim 'SEC availability', the cost of actual connection can be as high as \$15,000 – an unpleasant shock to the unsuspecting owner-builder. Of course, this type of problem is not restricted solely to kit homes but if you were hoping for the cheapest possible way to construct your own home, such a huge outlay to the SEC may not have been part of the plan.

I do not condemn kit homes for, despite the multitude of

problems, delays and unexpected expenses we incurred in the course of building, we are still happy with our home, though our eyes were certainly opened by the experience. We do wish that the many people who came forward during our months of headaches, frustration and worry to relate stories of their own bad experiences with kit homes had emerged earlier to warn us of the pitfalls. If, therefore, there is anyone considering purchasing a kit home, it would be wise to explore every avenue and then decide whether or not it will prove to be the economical dream-home on which you have your heart set!

GOING BUSH

by M. Foster Hill, Sheffield, Tas.

It started with a desire for space and a need to be surrounded by trees and greenery, not bricks and weatherboard, the urge to spend the days feeding the soul, not the teatime conversation of equally confined neighbours. Privacy too was a prime requisite. Now we are so far from town, visitors are never an inconvenience, as they sensibly take the precaution of a phone call first. Seven years later, there is only one regret – that we didn't go bush much sooner. The mistakes we made, and continue to make, are what make life interesting and amusing.

Take the time we became owners of twin wether goats. Suitable tethering places were arranged around the seven acres. Who led whom to where became a contest of wills and brute strength. To whichever remote point the pair were attached, they reached the house triumphantly before I did. They were addicted to television. We would settle down to an evening's viewing only to become aware of two disembodied white faces peering through the floor to ceiling windows, their black bodies invisible in the dark, their gaze riveted on the TV set. They did some excellent work on the blackberries, but their desire to live amongst us was stronger than their instinct for job satisfaction or survival. An ultimatum was issued. 'Either they go, or I do.' They did.

Felling trees was another activity with which we were not familiar, being big-city folk from way back. We'd watched the experts as they cleared the area on which to build our modest home, acquired the best chainsaw we could afford and sallied forth. We worked out the anticipated direction of fall and cut in the appropriate place, or so we thought. Somewhat apprehensive, we retired to a safe distance. The tree fell swiftly in the opposite direction, across the dirt road and came to rest on the neighbouring farmer's electric fence. Never has a tree been cut up and removed from the scene so rapidly. We had neglected to allow for a rather heavy overhanging limb. No one witnessed our humiliation. Another lesson learned.

With a mountain almost in the back yard and the sea thirty-three kilometres (20 miles) distant from the front, what more can life hold? An abundance of nocturnal wildlife is an added bonus. A walk at midnight sees the bandicoots scurry for cover. The torchlight shows the red-lit eyes of the ringtail and brush possum in the gum trees, and a tawny frogmouth or occasional barn owl blinking down the light beam. Once a bedraggled native cat watched me warily as he slowly slunk away. A Tassie devil screams but stays concealed. He is a regular visitor.

Twice I became involved in what can only be described as a bandicoot banquet. Both nights were mild and humid. The bush was alive with hopping, bouncing barred bandicoots, zigzagging the track with amazing agility. They seemed unaware of my presence despite the fact that one or two of them touched my feet during their crazy game. An expert in bandicoot behaviour, Dr A G Lyne suggests that 'Such a congregation could result when insects such as grubs, beetles, moths or cicadas become available as a food source in a localised area, thus attracting predators from surrounding territories.' Tasmanian naturalist the late Michael Sharland replied as follows to

my letter describing the incidents. 'You are one of the very lucky few who have seen bandicoots seemingly at play. Only once have I seen something matching it. In this case there were only four or five, and they acted in the same way you describe. We sat on the front doorstep and watched them in the moonlight.' Since then I have read a further explanation for the phenomenon. That is that the bandicoots could have eaten some food in season containing a substance which has the effect of making them drunk, hence their erratic behaviour. My sense of the ridiculous favours this explanation.

Daylight brings out the rabbit population, the odd echidna and a myriad of busy birds. One magnificent visitor is a large white hawk. The kookaburra, wren, fantail, raven, thornbill, goldfinch, silver eye and several honeyeaters appear to be permanent residents. Seven years of birdwatching has produced a list of fifty-three birds including the firetail finch, robin, parrot, pardalote and welcome swallow. Some have been glimpsed only once, others appear regularly at certain seasons. All this and tranquillity too.

Summer brings the snakes, of course, but they are always going the other way, as suspicious of me as I am of them. The largest blue tongue lizard to the smallest skink dart among the rocks and undergrowth. Once a large blue tongue lizard secreted itself in the brush at my intrusion, as her five babies played dead most convincingly. When I retreated some distance they swiftly returned to life.

Blackberries fill my hours for several weeks each summer – picking, pie-baking, jam making. Scratched, bleeding, covered in juice, I swear each year is the last but I cannot ever leave them to rot. There are people starving all over the world. I must do my bit.

There are flaws in this idyllic lifestyle: the need to conserve the tank water in the summer; the hot airless days when fire hangs in the atmosphere and a sudden breeze wafts the threat in your direction; the never-ending leaves that clog up the guttering; the spiders that take up residence on wet days and festoon the house, both inside and out, with webs they can spin faster than a brush can sweep; the ingenious mice who live in luxury on the morsels of food meant to trap them; plush bodied moths which knock relentlessly on the windows until all the lights are out.

These minor inconveniences are far outweighed by the enormous compensations of rural serenity. Better the furry bush rat than the city rat race.

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SCANDINAVIAN OILS MIXTURE FOR TIMBERS

by the Bush Apothecary, Bonang, Vic.

In GR 58 there was a request for a waxing/oiling mixture for 'raw timber'. We were busy at the time chainsawmilling and pouring foundations and for years we kept 'reminding' ourselves to put in to *Grass Roots* this splendid wood finish.

Some forty years ago an old Norwegian sailor-carpenter we met in the canefields related his traditional mixture, carried forward through the generations, maybe from as far back as the Vikings. Indeed he credited this oil with miraculous preserving qualities and held that the Viking ship found buried in the bog had its timbers impregnated in this wondrous oil. We found this oil absolutely the easiest wood finish to use. As well, we feel it's the finest, warmest, deepest to the eye, and it is the only finish we can think of which constantly improves itself. Each application serves not only to restore and augment, it cleans as well. Even painted objects will benefit from the protective coating and become more resistant to abrasion, wear and soiling. Blued steel also benefits from a rub with this oil to protect it from moisture.

THE OIL WAX MIXTURE

This is made up in two parts.

The Oil Mixture

Combine 1 part of linseed oil with 1 part of turpentine oil (derived from the conifer or turpentine trees and definitely not to be confused with the more recent mineral thinners). To assist absorption add 2 parts of mineral turps. This latter addition appears to have no function other than a thinner, and is supposed to almost completely evaporate. Take great care when mixing and using this as it is extremely flammable.

This oil mixture is to be kept when not in use in a screw top container excluding air as far as possible. To this end the volatile mineral turps is quite effective in driving off air. We found the 4 litre engine oil containers (clearly labelled, of course) handy provided they are clean and well drained and rinsed with kerosene or mineral turps. Three rinses with 25 ml (1 fl oz) each gives you a 'clean' vessel where one rinse of 75 ml (3 fl oz) will not. Do not use petrol (it's explosive) and dispose of your rinses wisely — another reason not to use petrol for rinsing.

Both linseed and turpentine oils are called 'hardening oils' (on contact with air), hence the necessity for airtight containers. In addition turpentine oil is volatile and inflammable!

Kittle Head were our supplier in Melbourne till 1986. (43 Eastwood St, Kensington 3031. Ph: 03-376-6619.) We dealt with them for 12 years and found them very co-operative — they would even consign orders to us by arrangement.

The 'Creamed' Beeswax

1/4 part by weight of beeswax and shavings
1 part of linseed oil
1 part of turpentine oil
2 parts of mineral turps

Gently heat the linseed oil, preferably on a hotplate or on top of your wood stove, with extreme care. Using a sharp knife and a chopping board shave the beeswax, then add to the linseed oil. When the beeswax shavings have melted in the hot linseed oil, it should be clear. Remove from heat and flame — preferably complete mixing outside, as the next step creates fumes which are flammable and explosive. Gently stirring the hot oil/

beeswax (hot oils and fats burn shockingly!) carefully add turpentine oil, and avoid breathing the fumes which will be produced. Continue stirring until mixed well. Pour into a container with a close fitting screwtop lid, wide enough for access but close enough to exclude air. To prevent a hard skin from forming cut some brown paper or greaseproof or polyethylene film to fit the surface as well.

On cooling a soft beeswax cream should result. If you require a liquid beeswax cream add before setting (the turpentine oil cools the mixture on addition) 2 parts of mineral turps. If your beeswax/linseed/turpentine oil mixture is too hot the mineral turps, being a volatile petroleum spirit, will start to evaporate (boil) vigorously and so fill a room with an explosive mixture, where any spark can result in tragedy. We prefer to mix in our turpentine and thinners outside in the open.

If you want to include rosin, that is resin from the conifer, 1/10 part can be added to the hot beeswax/oil mixture. Perhaps you would like to experiment and tell *Grass Roots* about your results. You could certainly vary the amount of beeswax in the creamed beeswax mixture up to double the quantity used here. The higher your beeswax content the more difficult the mixing will be and the harder the cream will be, if not lumpy, hence the advice to start with 1/4 part beeswax.

The beeswax cream makes a good 'wax finish' rubbed into the wood with a soft cloth, and kept soft in a screwtop jar containing a little mineral turps to minimise air in the container, since turps vaporises and thus forces out air.

Combining the Two

Add 5 to 10 percent of beeswax cream to the oils mixture and shake well to disperse the wax which, depending on the ambient temperature, can totally or partially dissolve. The Scandinavian oil is brushed evenly and thinly onto the wood, 'flood brushing' the first coats or if the timber is rough sawn. Always rub off excess oil. Brush onto garden tool handles too, to stop them cracking. To achieve a fine work finish my old Norwegian friend (God rest his soul, if now he is not over 90) told me, 'Once a day for a week, once a week for a month, once a month for a year,' and then seriously but with a twinkle in his eyes, 'Once a year for all the following generations.' What a finish!

ONION FOR INSECT BITES

Raw onion rubbed into insect bites will give instant relief from itching.

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SUNRISE FARM COMMUNITY

by Barry Newton, W Tree, Vic.



Carmel and Paul's mudbrick and timber cottage nestles amongst a well developed garden.

Further to the article in GR 76 on ONTOS Natural Health Retreat Centre, we thought that readers would also be interested in the other offshoot of the original development in the W Tree Valley. The background to our story is of course as Neal described for ONTOS but since then, though our philosophies remain similar, we have followed somewhat different paths.

In 1975 Fred Koch, with a spiritual vision of a Utopia of likeminded people following a spiritual path, purchased an 800 ha (2000 ac) area of farm land at W Tree north of Buchan, Victoria. In the first three years a lot of groundwork was done, plans drawn up, buildings started, roads formed, dams built, fencing put in, but due to many reasons a decision was made in 1978, by Fred Koch and those members wishing to do so, to divide the property and start a separate alternative community.

In July 1978, Sunrise Farm Corporation was formed as a separate identity to ONTOS, on 231 ha (572 ac). Members came and went over the years, no doubt their lives changed at the experience of community living. Others, committed to the lifestyle, to the land and trees, stayed and built their homes —mud brick, log, timber, brick, hexagon, conventional. The original farm house was used as a community centre. Community shared gardens gave way to each member having their own organic garden, fruit trees and flowers in the 75 m (250 ft) area surrounding their home. Beside the original old fruit orchard, a chestnut tree orchard was planted at one end of the property and since those early days two other fruit tree orchards are under way. Over the years many extra dams have been dug, giving gravity fed water to all garden areas. Another asset is the W Tree Creek running through the centre of Sunrise Farm.

In September 1988 we Sunrise Farm members celebrated our 10th anniversary/reunion. We invited past members, past

residents and friends and 143 adults and 45 children attended. Saturday, 6 p.m. till early morn, we shared — a meal/banquet — sitting on hay bales around a glorious bonfire, entertained with music, singing, caught up with lost friendships, exchanged memories. Sunday was our fun day for adults and kids, with everyone taking part in the many games. For lunch, scrumptious healthy tacos were served, natural icecream and punch or hot drinks — a real sharing!

Sunrise Farm Community, in December 1989, has 14 residential members, 8 children and the property is looking beautiful (if you love the land, you'll understand). We've allowed a lot of regrowth of trees on land originally cleared for farming, also have many acres virgin bush — no logging! We share our property, but still retain our privacy. We all try to come together once a month for a shared social dinner — bring a plate! — then between times have general meetings to discuss farm issues. We have a lot of interaction at our food co-op, which is located at Sunrise but used by all our friends in this area. The co-op works on an honour system where each member serves themselves, weighs and prices produce, enters in their book and either pays cash on the spot or settles at the end of the month. We try to have healthier products, buy bulk and bottle ourselves — tahini, tamari, olive oil, honey, grains, dried fruits, etc. We also have a barter system within the food co-op, for jams, cakes, honey, tofu (which one member makes and markets in this area), also tempeh, bread, goats and cows milk. We have Bach flower remedies available too, and have a clothes op shop for our own perusal prior to forwarding to the Red Cross. We endeavour to be environmentally conscious and have formed the W Tree Awareness Group. We recycle glass and plastic bottles, paper, cardboard, whatever!

The community purchased from a past member Blackwood Cottage, adjacent to our community house, as an art and craft



Houses at Sunrise Farm have been built with a variety of materials – log, brick, timber and mudbrick – and styles each expressing a blend of creative and practical skills. This photo shows part of Jaci and Bob's mudbrick cottage.

centre, and it has proved to be very successful – so far we have had workshops on spinning, weaving, felting, tapestry, dyeing, painting, pottery for adults and children, plus lambing, kidding, pasture improvement demonstrations, and more to come. Our art/craft centre is shared with folk from up to 25 km (15 miles) from this area.

Our main income for the running of Sunrise Farm is from our Merino sheep wool (two members have completed a wool classing course). We also agist cattle – much land, much grass, fire risk! As mentioned we are an organic farm, no 'heavy' sprays used, our gardens are in good balance, full of birds and bees from our hives. Most residents are vegetarians, a little meat is eaten. Besides the sheep, we have coloured sheep for our spinning group, Anglo Nubian goats, cows, chooks, geese, ducks, bees, plus many horses which up to this time have been used for W Tree Trail Rides.

One of the facts of life is that those who live on the land in an isolated area struggle to find work. We are 100 km (60 miles) from the main town of Bairnsdale, so those that need to travel outside our community seeking work. Others on the farm share work to meet day by day needs. We have to accept that those who are away cannot give their full energies to Sunrise.

At the time of writing, December 1989, we have just held the annual Rural Womens Festival – very enjoyable for those who attended with discussion groups, workshops, farm skills, healing-massage and EK, Tai Chi, meditation, yoga, swimming, music, Sufi dancing, singing around a great fire. Over the weekend the kids were cared for, giving mums time to share. The kids had a ball, sleeping Saturday night on the hay in the hayshed.

Sunrise Farm, 1990, is still the original Utopia started by Fred Koch/Krishna Yogi of ONTOS. We endeavour to uphold the three original basic rules: no mind altering drugs, no raising animals to slaughter for meat, no cats or dogs without prior permission of members. We have no particular religious path – many paths, one goal! As the years have gone by and times changed we have had to look into ourselves, discover where



Community members Barry, Jenny, Judy, Heather and Marg setting off for a day's trail riding in nearby bushland.

we are going and plan accordingly. We try to share with our fellow beings. Well, fresh air, fresh unpolluted water (no fluoride, no chlorine) – I like to think that we live in harmony with nature at Sunrise Farm – a beautiful place to be. Peace be with you.

If you would like to find out more about the community contact Barry Newton, Sunrise Farm, W Tree 3885. Ph: 051-550-213.

TEA STAINS ON WOOLLENS

Sprinkle a little borax on the stain, rinse in cold water. Soak stubborn stains in pure glycerine for a short time between treatments.

TAKE A SHINE TO OLD FURNITURE

by Mal Forbes, Footscray, Vic.

A lot of folk have discovered that old style furniture not only lasts longer but looks better than the newer stuff – and often costs less too. Most of these older pieces are worth spending a bit of time and effort on them to make them look good and, as long as you know what you're doing, will repay all your loving care by years of worthy service.

CLEANING

When you're working on a polished wood surface it's a good idea, at least until you're sure of what you're doing, to try the gentlest treatment first. If the piece is not terribly dirty, you could try reviving the surface using a mixture of equal parts white spirit, raw linseed oil and vinegar – give the container a good shake before using. If the surface has been French polished add methylated spirits to the mixture too. To find out whether a particular piece of furniture has been French polished, dab a little metho in a spot that doesn't show – if it goes tacky then there's shellac present from the French polish.

Apply the reviving treatment with a rough rag and rub into the surface to get rid of old polish and accumulated dirt. You may be surprised at what a difference this makes – often it buffs up the polish and is all that's needed. The mixture keeps well and is also handy for removing heat and water marks, if you act quickly, or for your yearly cleaning program (the alternative is to wash down with vinegar and water every few months).

Another helpful mixture, if the surface is very dirty, is a combination of:

20 ml (2/3 fl oz) white spirit
20 ml (2/3 fl oz) soft soap
60 ml (2 fl oz) raw linseed oil
1.2 l (2 pt) hot water

This can be used on either finished surfaces or untreated ones, simply sponge with a cloth thoroughly moistened in the mixture. After that you might find the furniture only needs polishing to make it shipshape and ready for use.

Once you've done this preliminary treatment, now's the time to decide how perfect you want your piece of furniture to look. If it comes down to a question of living with a few marks on the table, or stripping it right down and starting from scratch, so to speak, most GR people will opt for the first alternative –unless they want to make money from restoring old furniture. In that case, read on.

REMOVING SURFACE MARKS

The first step is to get rid of any polish by rubbing over the mark (along the grain) with a rag dipped in white spirit. After that, you can try – in order, because I've started with the gentlest – the treatments listed below. Try each first in a spot where it won't show and remember that it may take several goes before you get the effect you're looking for. Don't leave any of the treatments on the surface too long – rag and white spirit should remove all of them, unless some other method is suggested.

Scratches

- Methylated spirits gently applied to a slight scratch on a French polished surface should do the trick. Sharpen a match

and stroke the metho on with that, but don't polish over it until it is completely dry – leave for a few hours to make sure.

- If the scratch goes through the surface finish to the wood itself, cut open an oily nut e.g. walnut, macadamia (if you can spare one!) and rub into the scratch. Cover the mark with shoe polish that matches the colour of the wood surface.

- For a waxed finish that's scratched, fill the groove with melted wax from a suitably coloured crayon, wait till it sets firm, then rub over to bring up the shine. If it is a somewhat larger crevice, roughen the bottom of the hole first to make sure that the wax will stay in place.

- Larger holes (not craters, mind you) in polished wood can be filled with French polish – let it evaporate to thicken up a bit first, and roughen the base of the hole before applying it. Polish surface as before.

Bruises

These need very careful application of heat. If there's a finish of some sort on the surface of the wood, prick a number of holes in it first. Place several thicknesses of damp rag over the bruise, cover with a bottle top – metal, of course – and apply a moderately hot iron. The idea is to lift the bruised area by forcing steam into it – you can rest the iron on the cloth itself, but only in brief bursts. You don't want to exchange a scorch mark for a bruise!

Heat and Water Marks

Unless previous users of your old furniture have been very well trained you're sure to have some rings left by carelessly placed hot or cold drinks on the surface of tables, chair arms, dressing tables or cupboards. When attempting to remove these, remember to always rub along the grain of the wood, not around the ring itself.

- Give the area a good rubbing with camphorated oil. You can also leave some of this oil on the mark for a time before rubbing again.

- Use a mixture of equal parts raw linseed oil and white spirit in the same way – rub hard, leave some on the marks, then rub again.

- Apply a little metal polish, rub well but don't leave any on the surface – wipe off quickly with a dry cloth.

- Dip a rag in oil – doesn't matter what kind – then in cigarette ash or finely powdered pumice and rub (not too hard!) over the marked surface. Again, remove immediately with a dry cloth so you don't get too much abrasive effect.

Black Marks

These methods should help with ink and other dark stains on the surface, but won't do much for burn marks.

- You can try putting straight household bleach, e.g. White King, on the mark – carefully, with a matchstick, so you just cover the marked area – and leaving till it fades the stain. Wash off with plain water.

- Another treatment uses concentrated oxalic acid solution, adding more if needed. Borax will neutralise the acid when the mark has faded, then it can be rinsed off with plain water.

Other Surface Problems

- Solvent marks (perfume, hairspray, spirit are included here)

may need to be sanded very gently with the finest grade paper until smoothed off. Don't forget to wipe off the dust before you attempt to restore the colour and finish, especially if the surface has been French polished.

● Faded areas can also be sanded gently to just dull the surface, then recoloured with spirit based wood dye, several coats of teak oil or plenty of darker shoe polish – soften with white spirit, apply to wood, leave for a few hours then give a good rubbing with a rough rag.

● If the surface has gone dull, try rubbing on a little powdered pumice added to either some of the linseed oil mixture, or to wax polish.

● To restore the colour of the wood – often there's a lighter patch when you've finished removing a mark with one of these treatments – put a good coating of teak oil on the area till it darkens up to match the rest, then take the remaining oil off with white spirit. Another approach is the shoe polish treatment I've already described.

STRIPPING

How thorough do you want to be? With very old pieces it may be advisable to just take off a little of the surface varnish or French polish with white spirit or methylated spirits. Using steel wool rub with the grain, doing a full length narrow strip at a time and wiping off with white spirit as you go. More extensive stripping may require the use of commercial paint stripper, scrapers and sanders, though these are not nearly as gentle as the metho and white spirit treatment. Take care to follow directions for commercial strippers and don't use scrapers or sanders on veneered surfaces – too much risk of going right through! I don't like using caustic soda solution (lye) for stripping furniture – it's dangerous stuff and often leaves the wood so open grained that it takes twice as long to put a good finish on it.

Dyeing stripped furniture can sometimes be tricky, because many types of wood dye will only work on new wood and not stripped surfaces. Look for a water based dye and prepare the surface by wetting, drying then rubbing with medium fine sandpaper.

FINISHING

After all this work you want your piece of furniture to look as good as possible – and stay looking good. The finish you choose will depend on the type of furniture and how it is to be used.

Oiling

This is the easiest for the beginner to use, but takes a lot of 'elbow grease' to do properly. Dilute linseed oil with half the quantity of pure turps and rub in hard with an open weave cloth – the rougher textured the better. The way it works is that the heat caused by the rubbing evaporates the spirits, and makes the oil more solid so it builds up a firm protective layer over the grain. A bit more muscle, in the form of half a brick or block of wood wrapped up in the cloth, or a padded disc on your power drill, will speed things up quite a lot. Do about 1500 cm² (1 ft²) at a time and spend half an hour per section – less if power assisted. Leave for a few days, rub again, let yourself recover for a week or so, then attack it a third time.

Polyurethane

If you need a finish that's heat and water proof, this is the one

to choose. You need to be able to mix matt and gloss to get the sort of shine you want for a particular article. To make the finish last longer, try diluting the first coat with any solvent recommended by the manufacturer – one part of solvent to four of polyurethane. Otherwise stick to the instructions on the tin.

French Polish

There's a lot of mystique surrounding this method, and any furniture restorer you speak to will have their own special way of applying the finish. It takes a lot of skill and experience to do properly, though you may be able to buy a kit with prepackaged mixtures and directions for use. If you're keen to learn, find someone who's prepared to take the time to teach you thoroughly – and practise on scraps of wood or out of the way spots before you tackle the large piece.

Wax

To achieve a good finish the wood surface needs to be sealed first with linseed oil mixture or shellac. The harder waxes are best, as beeswax shows every mark and touch. Apply wax polish occasionally (again, the harder, more expensive ones are the most effective) to maintain the shine.

These polishes can also be used on oiled surfaces, but you don't need them on French polished wood. Just sponge it down every few months with water to which you've added a dash of vinegar – one part to ten of water. Polyurethane need only be wiped over with detergent and water. After all that hard work, keeping your furniture looking good is relatively easy. Then have a well earned break and put your feet up – but not on the furniture!

BRASS CLEANER

Worcestershire sauce is excellent for cleaning brass, copper or bronze. Afterwards rub with cooking oil to shine.

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HYDROPONIC GARDENING

An Alternative for the Tropics

by Marion Boetje, Brooweenya, Qld.

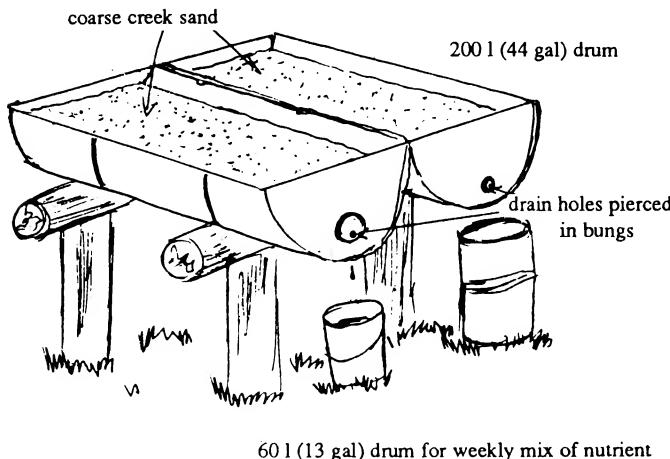
Over the last couple of years several articles on gardening in the tropics and on hydroponics have appeared in *Grass Roots*. Our experience has been that these two subjects go well together. In fact, for us, hydroponics provided the solution for many of the problems we encountered with gardens in the tropics.

We lived on the central Queensland gemfields for eleven years in an environment which prompted us to experiment with hydroponic gardens. Having moved to central Queensland at the beginning of 1973, we experienced the 'big wet' of 73-74. For a while water was plentiful, but the speargrass was rampant. Our problems were mainly those of keeping the grass slashed around our camp and preventing it from encroaching on the garden.

As the seasons evened out and we moved towards the drought years of the 70s and early 80s, we began to consider hydroponics as an alternative means of providing ourselves with fresh vegetables. We had been living on a black soil creek flat which produced wonderful vegetables for the first year. After that, we found the garden needed quite massive doses of compost or fertiliser and very heavy mulching to combat hard-baking of the soil. For a small garden, this would not normally be a problem, but our garden was very big, as at that time there was very little in the way of fresh vegetables available in the local store. Even the nearest town, 72 km (45 miles) away, had only one tiny fruit shop and uncertain delivery days. Anyway because of its size the gardening fast became a wearying chore. It was then we became interested in hydroponics and the system we worked out suited our needs very well.

We developed two types of garden, one recycling its own water and one a total loss water system. For the first type we cut a 200 lit (44 gal) drum in half lengthwise and pierced holes in both the bungs. The half drums were then placed side by side on a bush pole stand about 1 m (3 ft) high, out of reach of wallabies and bandicoots – but not cattle, as we later discovered. In fact, cattle had not been much of a problem

Small Hydroponic Garden



Bamboo used for staking the tomato plants started growing too – obviously the nutrient solution we were using was successful.

during the good years, but in the drought practically no fence could keep them away from the enticing greenness of the garden. Anyway, these drums were placed on the stands with a gentle slope towards the bung ends and filled with creek sand. A 60 lit (13 gal) drum and a bucket were then placed to catch the water from the bungholes for recycling.

Each week, we filled the 60 lit (13 gal) drum with water and put one heaped tablespoon of 'Thrive' in it. We bucketed this mixture onto the garden to saturation point daily, continuously recycling it for a week. At the end of each week any surplus mixture was put onto other gardens or trees and a fresh mix was made so we always knew how much nutrient was in the water. In summer, we covered the drum to lessen evaporation loss, but did not bother in winter. In summer, the 60 lit (13 gal) barely lasted the week but in winter it was plenty.

In this garden we grew lettuces, silver beet, cabbages and cauliflowers as closely as they would fit. At one stage, we had 15 mature lettuces in each side, with the added bonus that the wallabies and rabbits (yes, there are rabbits in Queensland!) couldn't get at them. This garden lasted about seven years before the drum rusted out and needed replacing.

For the other hydroponic garden, we pressed into service a sapphire-processing puddler no longer in use. This was a large steel tank 2.5 m (8 ft) in diameter and 45 cm (18 in) deep with a flat steel base. This we also filled with creek sand but we found that although there were drain holes we rarely lost any water because the area of the garden and the depth of the sand were so great.

We watered this garden daily with buckets using about a level dessertspoon of 'Thrive' to a 9 lit (2 gal) bucket, rarely watering to saturation point. Sometimes we made up a large drum of nutrient solution and bucketed it on and sometimes we put our low pressure sprinklers on the garden and then put a single bucket of more concentrated solution on. All in all, within reason, we were pretty casual about it and the garden was fairly hassle-free.

In this garden we grew leaf vegetables, tomatoes, loofahs, carrots, cucumbers, beetroot, shallots, squash and zucchini. The zucchini tended to be a nuisance because their rough leaves rubbed on things like silver beet and lettuce when grown so close together and burnt them. They also took up too much room but we still had the occasional plant. At one stage, we built a teepee-like construction of sticks in the centre of the garden to train cucumbers and loofahs on. We also grew cucumbers in the garden to keep the cattle out (cows did not seem to bother cucumbers). Tomatoes we staked with bamboo stakes – until the 'stakes' began to grow too!

The advantages of these hydroponic gardens were numerous:

- The gardens were raised so very little bending was required.
- No digging was needed.
- No weeds were evident for the first couple of years. A few weeds appeared after that, as rootlets and gum leaves combined with the sand and started to turn it to soil.
- Weeds were easy to remove from the damp sand.
- Many vegetables could be grown in a small area as there was no competition for food.
- The plants grew strong and healthy and this appeared to deter the insect attacks that we experienced with conventional gardens. Nutrient costs were somewhat offset by a drop in pest control products. (In central Queensland conditions, heavy soils and water problems do not allow you to over-produce to offset insect attack. Every plant has to work for you.)
- We used vastly decreased amounts of water. Previously, we had pumped from a creek directly onto the gardens, which was expensive, or else we pumped to a high tank and gravity fed to the garden sprinklers. One summer, we estimated we pumped 4500 lit (1000 gal) every two days for the garden, some of which was wasted on garden paths and odd corners etc. Both hydroponic gardens together in summer took at the most about 450 lit (100 gal) a week, and less in winter. We still had to grow pumpkins separately and at one stage had two zucchini plants in the isolation ward – 23 lit (5 gal) drums filled with sand, their own mini hydroponic garden.

- The garden was useful for striking cuttings. As already mentioned, we once 'struck' our bamboo tomato stakes.
- The raised level of the beds deterred a lot of would-be nibblers and munchers.
- Again smaller gardens were easier to cover from winter frosts (we got beauties in central Queensland too). Also for

summer shade we devised a number of different covers for the plants' protection. These were easily erected over the small gardens.

Against these advantages, hydroponic gardens do have a number of disadvantages:

- Rain, hail or shine the garden needs nutrient, so you may be out watering in the pouring rain, or at least watering an already saturated garden.
- The garden may be more troublesome to set up than conventional gardens.
- You may have a prejudice against using any kind of chemicals on your plants. For us, the decrease in insect attack and the subsequent decrease in the need for insecticides offset this.

Finally: we read a lot on hydroponic gardens and we had friends who measured chemicals and mixed them meticulously for their gardens. Their hydroponic gardens did no better than ours. Nitrogen-high 'Thrive' produced good tomatoes as well as leaf and root vegetables. Some of our methods were slap-happy by purists' standards but they sure worked for us. Our garden was productive, hassle-free and fun. We live in an area now with patches of ideal garden soil, good rainfall and a more temperate climate but we have fond memories of our hydroponic setup with its no-dig, weed-free arrangements.

GARDEN HINTS

by John Mason, Lilydale, Vic.

Garden nasties such as snails, slugs, insects and diseases can become a real headache at this time of the year. Here are a few ideas on safe, chemical-free ways you can control them.

Diatomaceous earth sprinkled around the garden will kill most insects, slugs and snails without harming people, dogs or cats. This white powder is sold in swimming pool shops, where it is used for something quite different. It consists of the remains of microscopic organisms which died thousands of years ago. The super fine powder is razor sharp to tiny garden pests, killing them quickly, but is harmless to larger animals.

Hang tin foil containers or strips of aluminium foil from a fruit tree as your fruit begins to ripen. The reflections and movement in the wind help keep birds away until you harvest your crop. Note though, that your local bird population will become used to the deterrent after a few weeks.

Various types of natural sprays can be made from common herbs to help control pests and diseases (back copies of *Grass Roots* have lots of recipes for these). To make a spray, fill a pot with the plant (leaves, roots or whole stalks) and cover with water – just. Bring to the boil. As soon as it starts boiling, turn the stove off and allow the pot to stand for about 10-15 minutes. Strain off the plant parts and mix liquid with 4 parts water. Spray immediately. This type of spray does not store well.

- Garlic spray – make with leaves or cloves of garlic and spray to control insects or fungus diseases.
- Stinging nettle – make with leaves and spray for aphids.
- Chamomile – use leaves and flowers and spray for damping off diseases.
- Chives – use leaves and spray to control scabs and mildews.

For more information on these and other garden hints write to: The Australian Horticultural Correspondence School, 264 Swansea Road, Lilydale 3140.

CHILDHOOD FIRST AID

by Lisa Ficken, ND.

First aid for children is extremely important, especially for parents with those super-adventurous and overly inquisitive children who always need patching up, or for those clumsy types like me who are always falling over. My mother used to tell me to watch where I walked – I'd look at my feet and get knocked to the ground by a low hanging branch! Here are some tips to cope with accidents and other childhood problems.

CUTS

Treatment of course depends on the severity. Small cuts can often be 'fixed' with the application of a band-aid or a kiss. It is amazing the power of the band-aid – out of sight, out of mind. But remember always to cleanse the wound with a form of antiseptic – salt water is good to bathe wounds and sea salt in a little warm water is preferable. Lemon juice, eucalyptus or tea tree oil, or some thyme tea are also antibacterial. All should be diluted in warm water.

If the bleeding is more severe, after cleansing the wound thoroughly, application of cold water, pressure – indirect in the form of a firm bandage (not restricting blood flow so much that the part turns blue), or direct to the blood vessels leading to the wound – and elevation of the part will alleviate bleeding. The child and affected part should be kept still to allow natural blood clotting to occur. If more dressing needs to be applied, do not remove the first dressing as it may dislodge the clot that has begun to form. If the cut is deep, it may require stitches.

Comfrey cream was an excellent healing cream to apply to these types of injuries but it is no longer readily available. Hypericum (St John's wort) Fluid Extract in a little water can be used as a wash, but you must dilute it – only a few drops are needed. It will act as an antiseptic. Calendula is used as a styptic to stop bleeding – it can be used as a cream, diluted fluid extract in water or, if these are not available, marigold petals (i.e. calendula) can be chopped and applied. Witchhazel extract (a few drops in water) is also excellent for stopping bleeding. A cream that would be handy to have in the medicine chest for cuts, gashes, abrasions, gravel rash, jammed fingers and nappy rash is:

Hypericum F.E.

Calendula F.E. in a lanolin base

Comfrey F.E. (not available in Victoria)

This should be made up by your local naturopath or chemist who stocks these materials. A banana skin (inside down) placed on the wound will help heal it, as will the sliced leaf of an aloe vera plant.

ABRASIONS

Very common with children who ride bikes or have skates or skate boards, they usually occur over bony prominences and tend not to bleed as much as ooze serum. They are often dirty wounds with gravel embedded into the skin, so it is very important to cleanse the area well with one of the above as a mild antiseptic. Garlic poultices are very useful in bad abrasions where there is a high risk of infection. Garlic is an excellent antibiotic.

BRUIISING

Bruising is caused by haemorrhage in deep tissue. To prevent further haemorrhaging, apply ice packs to the area. This will constrict the blood vessels, but there will be a following reflex dilation of the vessels which will tend to aggravate the problem if pressure is not applied in the form of bandaging (where possible). Poultices are really helpful – a chamomile teabag after immersion into warm water will soothe, decrease inflammation and pain. Arnica cream is excellent for bruising and will help to heal the tissues that are damaged, but it is *not* to be applied to broken skin. Arnica in homoeopathic form can be taken internally or diluted and applied externally as a wash. Arnica should not be taken internally as a crude herb. Comfrey cream is another important remedy that facilitates healing (only if you don't live in Victoria).

BITES

If you have a swimming pool, quite often you will be faced with treating bee-stings as these insects are attracted to the water. Bee-stings are frightening and painful for children, and they can quite often be dangerous in the case of an allergic child, who will puff and swell. Be cautious with sugary drinks in the outdoors as the bees again can be attracted and if they are swallowed, the throat of the child can swell, risking suffocation. Treatment of a bee-sting requires careful removal of the sting (seen as a black speck) and application of ice to the area. Sodium bicarbonate paste applied to the area can help to neutralise the venomous reaction. Homoeopathic Ledum (for puncture wounds and stings), or Apis are very useful to have for this problem, but I would suggest you get some instruction as to their uses from your local naturopath or homoeopath before use.

Mosquito bites are annoying and in some children can cause quite a large swelling. An apple cider vinegar wash can be soothing, or an onion slice applied to the area. Homoeopathic Ledum is again useful.

BURNS

If you have ever been through the Children's Hospital Burns Ward, you will be aware of the extreme care that is needed with children in the kitchen, bathroom, with fires and the purchase of toys and clothing. The results of burn injuries can be horrific. To treat minor burns, some of the old wives tales must be forgotten – *don't* apply butter or oils to the affected part. The burnt area should be placed immediately under the cold water tap, or cold compresses should be applied. Aloe vera gel (or, if you have a plant, the juice) can be applied to take the heat and sting out of a burn. If the part blisters, do not prick the blisters as they cover the raw, tender skin. If blisters are pricked, you risk infection for your child. Application of a sterile bandage may be necessary, but only lightly so that there is a certain amount of air flow. Mild burns will benefit from a compress of marshmallow root ($\frac{1}{2}$ litre/ $\frac{1}{8}$ pt cold water over 1-2 tablespoons shredded root, stand for 6-8 hours – make loose compress and repeat often), shredded potato poultice, or quince gel ($\frac{1}{2}$ litre/ $\frac{1}{8}$ pt cold water over 2 tablespoons seeds, stand several hours, collect slime from seed, place on a linen towel

and apply to burnt area). Even the seeds applied to the burnt area can be helpful. After an acute episode of a burn, vitamin E cream or oil may be applied to aid healing and prevent scarring. If the burn is serious, remove the child from the cause and cut away clothing where necessary (if not stuck to the child). Irrigate the area liberally with cold water, cover the area with a sterile dressing to reduce the risk of infection or, if a large area, cover with a sheet or towel. Give a small amount of water if the patient is thirsty and seek medical advice. Remember that burns most frequently occur through:

- carelessness with matches or cigarettes;
- scalding with hot liquids;
- unguarded open fires;
- immersion into an overheated bath;
- chemicals – acids and detergents most commonly;
- sun.

For sunburn, give the child cold showers or cold baths, or cool, moist compresses; rest him/her and give plenty of fluids. Application of aloe vera gel to the area will take out the sting. Cucumber applied to the area will soothe the burning. Homoeopathic Glonoine is great for the headache (pounding and bursting sensation) that often comes from exposure to the sun. It is wise in these conditions to replace the mineral and water soluble vitamin loss that occurs with the loss of fluids in these conditions. Vitamins C is especially good for the shock and to prevent infections.

If it is a chemical burn, neutralise the chemical: if acid wash with alkali e.g. bicarbonate of soda in water; if alkali wash with an acid, e.g. vinegar in a little water.

FRACTURES

Some kids just seem to be prone to broken bones. This is often due to a calcium deficiency. If your child has fallen and you suspect a broken bone, these symptoms will help confirm it:

- pain at the site of the injury;
- swelling, later bruising;
- loss of function;
- deformity;
- abnormal mobility of bones;
- crackling noises (crepitations).

If these symptoms are present, then instruct your child not to move the part. If the skin is broken, cover with a sterile bandage to prevent the bone from becoming infected. Handle it gently, elevating where possible. To aid knitting of bones comfrey was traditionally used. Another herb – boneset – is also very useful, as well as supplements of calcium and vitamins A and B.

RESCUE REMEDY

This is a must for your first aid chest, for accidents, shock, fear, panic and any situation that is hard to cope with. It is a Bach Flower remedy made from Impatiens, Star of Bethlehem, Cherry Plum, Rock Rose and Clematis. Four drops every 5-15 minutes in acute conditions can help to allay those feelings. It is wonderful to help children get through a crisis or accident, and works for adults just as well. It can be dropped directly on the tongue or even on skin, bites, lacerations, burns, stings, etc. It has no side effects, is non-toxic and is entirely safe to use on any child. For further information see your local naturopath. Reprinted from *A-Z Health*, Aug 85, No 15 (no longer in publication).



Whole eggs in their shells cannot be frozen as the shell will burst on freezing, however eggs, either whole or separated, can be successfully frozen for up to 6 months. Start with very fresh eggs. It will be necessary to add either salt or sugar to the yolk (depending on the final use), as egg yolk contains a gelatin substance which causes it to turn to a play-dough consistency when frozen.

If you want whole eggs, break the yolks and with a fork stir lightly into the whites, adding 1 teaspoon of salt or sugar (honey may also be used) per 12 eggs. Separated yolks will also need to be broken before freezing. Three tablespoons of 'scrambled' egg, or one of yolk and two of white, are equivalent to one egg. To store individual egg portions, put their equivalents into the sections of a large ice-cube tray, when frozen remove and store in a plastic bag; be sure to label whether you added salt or sugar.

Eggs should be thawed completely before using, approximately 9 hours in the refrigerator or 4 hours at room temperature. They should have the taste, texture and nutritional value of fresh eggs. Use as soon as possible after thawing as deterioration is rapid.

Whites can be frozen without adding anything. Just separate them from the yolks, pour into freezer containers, label and store. They can be thawed under cold running water or in the refrigerator, but once thawed will beat better if allowed to stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Use them as you would fresh egg whites.

MARIA TREBEN REVEALS HER SECRETS

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Perfect Pawpaws

by Jannette Parke, Sexton, Qld.

Everybody knows vitamin C is vital in maintaining our health. But did you know that amongst the commercially available fruit and vegetables, pawpaw is one of the richest sources of that essential vitamin? Originally from South America, the pawpaw (*Carica papaya*) is now grown in many subtropical and tropical countries. In Australia it thrives in the coastal areas of Queensland and northern New South Wales. Liable to damage from the cold, it should be grown in positions sheltered from winds and frost.

The tree is small, rarely exceeding about 7 m (23 ft). The trunk, with a spongy texture and usually hollow in the middle, is surmounted by a crown of large palmate leaves. Fruit is produced close to the trunk at the base of each leaf stem on female trees and suspended from long stalks on male trees. The fruit from the male tree is small and of little commercial value. Male trees are grown only for fertilisation purposes.

GROWING PAWPAWS

Seeds are planted in beds in the spring to early summer and the small seedlings can be transplanted when they reach from 15 to 30 cm (6-12 in) in height. Fresh seeds can be stored by removing the gelatinous coating and washing and drying them. Placed in an airtight container they can then be planted when conditions are favourable. Soil should be well drained to a depth of 1 m (3 ft). Very acid soil may require an application of lime at least four weeks before planting. A good mixed fertiliser is recommended to be worked into the soil prior to planting and of course an organic mulch placed around each tree would be of great benefit.

Given suitable growing conditions, a tree will bear in approximately 12 months and the amount of fruit produced over its lifespan will be substantial. As the tree ages, the fruit is developed higher and higher from the ground until eventually a ladder is needed for harvesting!

USING THE FRUIT

Pawpaw skin is very thin, thus making it susceptible to blemishes. This, however, does not detract from the eating quality of the fruit. Some people swear by pawpaw as an instant pick-me-up after long hours of travelling. The taste is refreshing and highly desirable to a great many dedicated papaya eaters but may need to be acquired by others! Most people I know enjoy nothing better than a slice of fresh pawpaw with a squeeze of orange juice. The more adventurous might like to try the following recipes.

Pawpaw as a Vegetable

pawpaw (green)
onions, peeled

Parcook onions, place over them pieces of fully developed green pawpaw. Steam until tender.

Pawpaw Crumble

large pawpaw
1 tbsp golden syrup
2 tbsp water
1 tbsp chopped preserved ginger
juice of 1 lemon
2 tbsp brown sugar



1 tbsp butter or margarine
1/2 cup wholemeal SR flour
3 tbsp coconut

Dice peeled pawpaw and place in syrup made by boiling 1 tbsp sugar with water, lemon juice and golden syrup for 3 minutes. Add ginger and simmer gently until pawpaw is soft and clear. Place in buttered pie dish and allow to cool. Prepare crumble by mixing remaining sugar and flour with butter or margarine until mixture resembles bread crumbs, spread this over cooked pawpaw. Mix the coconut with a few drops of vanilla essence and sprinkle over the top. Bake in a moderate oven for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with custard.

Pawpaw Scones

1 tbsp butter
2 tbsp raw sugar
1 egg
1/2 cup grated pawpaw
juice of 1/2 lemon
2 cups wholemeal SR flour

Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add beaten egg gradually. Stir in pawpaw and lemon juice. Add flour and work to a soft dough. Turn on to floured working surface and roll out. Cut into scones. Bake in a hot oven at 220°C for 15 minutes.

Steamed Pawpaw Pudding

2 cups wholemeal SR flour
3 tbsp butter
4-6 tbsp warm water
1 ripe pawpaw, peeled and seeded
2 tsp raw sugar
1/3 cup orange juice

Sift flour into a bowl and rub in butter. Add water slowly, mixing to a smooth dough. Knead lightly. Using 2/3 of pastry, roll out to line a steaming basin. Cut pawpaw into small pieces and fill pastry shell. Combine orange juice and sugar and pour over pawpaw. Roll out remaining pastry to cover pawpaw, joining at the edges. Cover and steam for 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Serve warm with custard.

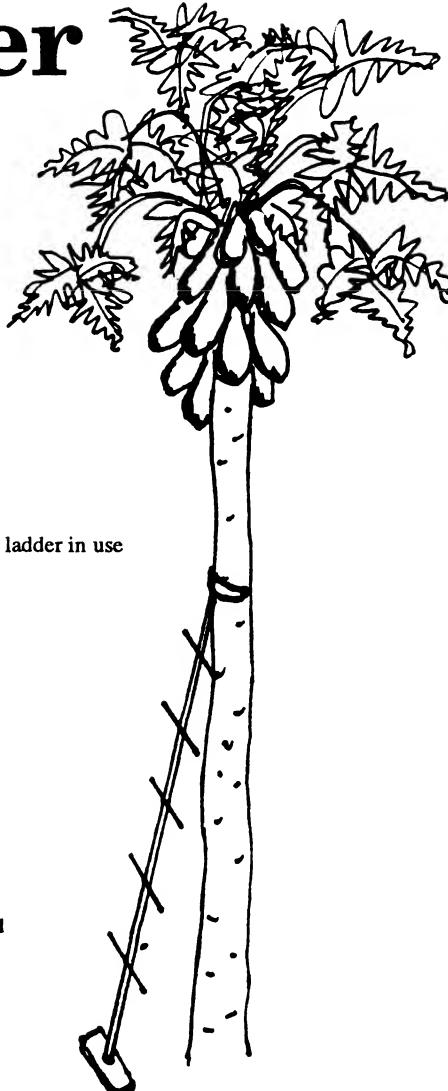
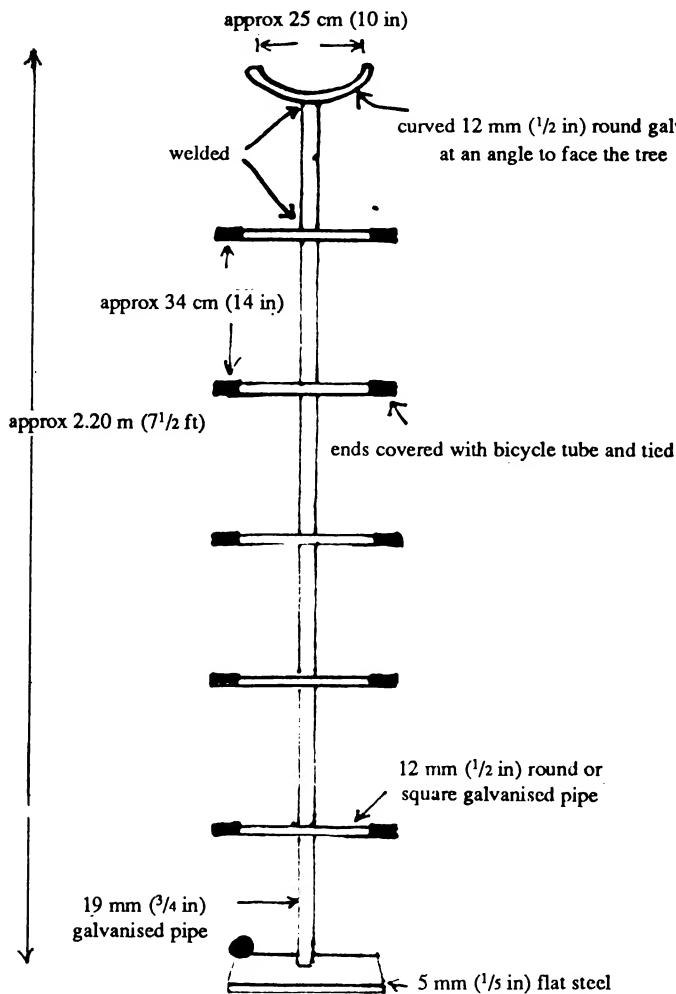
Pawpaw Ladder

by Lindy & Michael Alba, Mareeba, Qld.

We'd like to share the design of the ladders we make and use for picking pawpaws. Normal ladders always swung around at the wrong time (when you were up the top of the ladder) so Michael decided to make one with a curved top to fit around the tree. They have been very successful and we have been using them for a few years now with no mishaps. When the pawpaws cannot be reached and picked from the top of the ladders anymore, they are left for the flying foxes for about a year before the trees are pulled out.

The cross bars are securely welded on at the top and bottom of each bar. The ends of these bars must be covered with some rubber tubing, or soft PVC pipe can be used over square steel, as the ends are very sharp. The whole bar can be covered for better grip for the feet but this is not necessary. The bottom piece of flat steel is welded on at an angle so that it is flat on the ground when the ladder is leaned against a tree and the top curved piece is welded on at an angle to face the tree. The curve of this piece can be varied depending on the type of tree you plan to use it on, but should be a little wider than your biggest tree.

Construction details



The ladder in use

Always remember that pawpaw trunks are soft wood and very hollow, so when climbing one have the ladder fairly upright and pull the tree towards you so your weight is more on the ladder and not against the tree. Happy pawpaw picking.

SEXING PAWPAW SEEDS

To find male and female pawpaw seeds place seeds in a bowl of water. The females will sink while the males float to the surface.

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Pawpaws in Cooler Climates

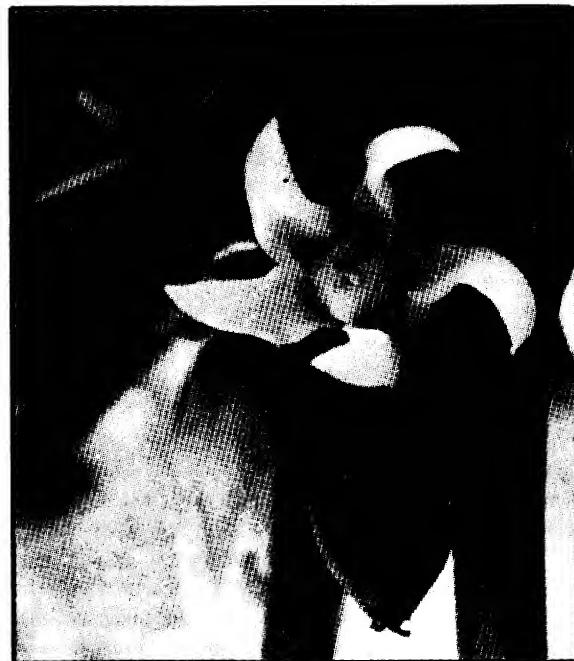
by Alan Harding, Gosford, NSW.

Although pawpaws are commonly grown in our tropical north they can also be successfully grown in cooler areas. A warm frostfree site with protection from the wind is desirable, perhaps with a northerly aspect. Trees grow more slowly in a cooler climate than in the tropics, fruit set is often poor and fruit is slow to ripen. There is an advantage to be gained from planting monosexual cultivars as they crop better in cooler conditions, whilst bisexual plants are best suited to the tropics.

If you wish to grow pawpaws in your garden keep in mind that trees can reach about 10 m (33 ft) though desirable producers range from 5-7 m (16-23 ft). Trees come into production 12-18 months after planting, depending on the climate. Commercially trees are at their most productive for the first two years and then the yield drops off, but home gardeners could harvest a satisfactory crop for several years.

Ratooning can be carried out on older trees or on trees that are tall and difficult to harvest. Trees are cut back to about 0.6-0.9 m (2-3 ft) above ground level. Then the two strongest shoots on the cut stem are allowed to grow, preferably on opposite sides of the old stem. At least one or two crops can be expected after ratooning. The cutting back is best performed when soil temperatures have risen and some rain has occurred, November being suitable in tropical regions. The process is too harsh in winter and may kill the tree.

Dedicated connoisseurs of pawpaws living in cooler regions could consider growing a number of trees closely together in covered greenhouses. Trees could be spaced 1 x 1.5 m (3 x 5 ft) apart and protected by plastic during the cold months and shade cloth during summer. Excessive height may be controlled by taking off the top of the main stem and encouraging the



Flower and fruit from female tree. Pawpaws may be monosexual - either male or female - or bisexual, the former being more suited to growing in cooler areas.

development of a branched frame. Young trees are decapitated, as it is commonly called, at about 5 months and effectively produce two or three branches. Extra room may need to be allowed for this branching out if trees are grown closely in greenhouse type conditions.

Backyard Pawpaws

An elderly gentleman who lives in north Queensland has some outstanding pawpaw trees growing in his garden. They are no more than 2.1 m (7 ft) tall, but from the ground up are laden with fruit of good size and quality and have plenty of leaves on the top to protect the pawpaws. He prunes the roots by the following method to produce the trees. When the young trees are 1 m (3 ft) high, he takes a square nosed garden spade and measures its length from the trunk of the tree. He then digs down to spade depth in a complete circle around the tree. This will shorten the roots and slow down their growth. The trees will only grow as high as the root system can support and growth hormones which would normally have been used in root and leaf formation are now directed towards the production of fruit in abundance.

Pawpaws like well drained soil and good aeration, or they get wet feet and the following problems result:

- Trunk rot - the older leaves suddenly shrivel and dry out, the crown becomes excessively dry and rotten areas appear on the trunk.
- Root rot - this is a form of wilt. The leaves collapse and hang loosely.
- Dieback - the leaves at the centre of the top brown and die, and the trunk gradually dies from the top down.
- Yellow crinkle - this is a viral disease which is not common

in the home garden. The older leaves yellow, bend down and drop off, eventually the tree is bare except for a few deformed leaves on top. Trees should be removed and burned as soon as this disease is suspected.

● Powdery mildew - this is a fungus which can be treated with powdered sulphur or sulphur spray.

● Red spider - this mite attacks the large juicy leaves. The first sign of infestation is yellow streaks on the ribs. If untreated this will spread over the entire leaf which will yellow, turn brown and eventually drop off. Sulphur can also be used to control these pests.

Taken from an article in the *Queensland Gardener*, May 1985.

TO UNBLOCK SINK DRAINS

Place a handful of salt down the drain, pour in half a cup of vinegar. Leave for half an hour. Pour in boiling water to clear.

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We've not long moved to our little country cottage on the edge of a small town. We don't have a cat or dog as we want to enjoy the native birds but our haven is being terrorised by several tom cats who treat the place as a recuperation centre and leave it reeking of urine. We don't feed them, we don't encourage them but they seem to drop by every few days. How can we get rid of them?

Ada Cave
Powelltown 3797.

If they are stray cats you may be able to trap them and have them castrated – if this is not possible you will need to make the place as unwelcoming as possible. Check with the local veterinary clinic to see what products for repelling cats are available and try them if they sound suitable. As well, there are a number of home hints you could use. Orange peel strewn around has mixed results, as too moth balls. Small bottles of cloudy ammonia two thirds buried in the soil and placed strategically are said to give off repelling odours and be most successful. Start with bottles about half full and top up regularly. If the cats are urinating around verandahs and sheds wash the area with a diluted bleach or white vinegar water mix. Some gardeners suggest the most effective method is hosing the cats whenever you see them or spraying them with a mild disinfectant. They tire of regularly cleaning themselves of the latter and end up associating your place and the smell of the disinfectant with traumatic experiences. The only other option is to get a small dog which doesn't like cats and place bird feeding stations up off the ground, or train it not to chase birds.

We would be grateful for some advice on rearing bought in calves. We have found they all scour – to a varying degree – no matter how carefully we manage the feeding. We would rather find some way other than drugs. Last year we used Maxicrop in the Denkavit – not all that successful. I remember using cider vinegar many years ago and that worked well, with skim milk and our own calves. Now I have forgotten the dose. The calves demand feed from a drum thing once they are sucking okay. Why do they scour? Do you think the cider vinegar would be useful and if so how much and how often? Or is there some better way?

E A Dowsett
Stradbroke 3851.

Gippsland soils are notoriously low in magnesium, and calves have a need for that mineral. Get some fine dolomite powder (South Eastern Mineral Fertilisers, Warragul, have it) and add it to the milk at the rate of a dessertspoon per calf per day. Keep going with the liquid seaweed because it supplies all the other trace minerals, especially selenium, which is often missing. For any calves that are scouring very badly, give a heaped dessertspoon of sodium ascorbate powder daily (with the dolomite and seaweed liquid) until they are better or 5 g of vitamin C by injection (available from good fodder stores in 50ml bottles). Do not overfeed them, and make sure that the milk 'drum' is kept clean.

We have a large 3 year old desexed, butting goat, who is now too hard for me to handle. Are there any herbs or such that would quieten that part of his nature? I don't want to tie him

up all the time or have him put down, but I also want to move around the paddock without watching my back all the time.

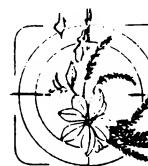
Helen Van Dyke
Broadford 3658.

Three year old wethers that have been allowed to learn how to butt are bad news. There are three options, all pretty drastic: one is to shoot him before he really hurts anyone; two is to shut him away with a 'Danger' sign on the gate and keep out; and three is to give him a good beating. The last option is not quite so drastic as it sounds, but it must be done by the person that he butts. A short piece of garden hose can be used to hit him hard each side of the face (avoiding the eyes). This worked years ago with a stud buck that had been allowed to butt, only I hit him with my bare hands (a practice I do not recommend); if this doesn't work try options one or two! A water pistol is supposed to work, but one needs to be facing the goat at all times – impracticable, I have found. Never let a young goat learn to butt!

I have a problem with lice in sheep and was wondering if anyone knows any methods of controlling them, using natural methods rather than using poisonous chemicals. Replies would be much appreciated.

Paul Hercott
Swan Hill 3585.

To control the lice on your sheep you will have to give them a small quantity of feed daily; into the feed put a heaped teaspoon per sheep of sulphur powder (the yellow sort) daily, and this will discourage lice. But until they have been shorn you will not have total control. Once they are shorn, rub the sulphur powder into the wool all over them, and then continue feeding daily as above. Lice etc. do not like living on animals unless they are deficient in sulphur. It also helps their digestion. A little dolomite and seaweed meal, about a teaspoon of each, would also make them feel better, and would cut down the risk of fly strike.



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SOW FOR SUCCESSFUL RESULTS

Although for many gardening is a relaxing and pleasurable hobby, it's sensible to make the most of the time and energy expended and to do that requires thinking ahead to what you would like to be harvesting and when. Of course a diary recording past years' plantings is a great help, especially if you've listed the varieties used and how they fared, but even if you're not the writing type or you're new to gardening there are many helpful books available that advise on planning for year-round production. This is especially relevant when choosing the right variety for your climate and soil type, as so many new chums plant out of season and become dejected with the poor results. Check with seed companies when ordering that your desired varieties are suitable – better to seek specialist advice at the start than be disappointed later.

BEANS FOR WARM CLIMES

Many of the vegies we grow in Australia come from climates vastly different from our own and so it is pleasing to be able to suggest some varieties of beans suited to hot, wet northern conditions. Although they are basically subtropical species, gardeners in warm spots in temperate parts of the country may also like to try them.

Rice Bean: a perennial vine frequently grown as an annual for enriching the soil as a green manure crop. The small narrow pods are delicious eaten young with the leaves or may be allowed to mature and the beans dried and cooked or sprouted. Rice beans are a hardy legume tolerant of heat, wet conditions, most diseases and pests, grow in a variety of soils and may be used as a shade plant around fowl houses where the beans are eagerly sought. Seed is available from Phoenix and Eden Seeds and Tea Tree Plants/Seeds.

Madagascar Bean: another perennial climber of tropical origin, it produces large, red spotted beans suitable for eating while still green or drying for winter usage. Three-four vines are sufficient for most needs. Available from both Eden Seeds and Tea Tree Plants/Seeds.

Sword Bean: also a perennial climber, the name is derived from the unusual sword shape of the pod. Half grown peas may be picked and eaten – despite their coarse appearance they are delicious sliced and steamed. Seed when mature is large and red coloured and needs to be boiled, the red skin peeled off and the seed reboiled before eating. Phoenix Seeds are the supplier.

KANG KONG (also called water spinach)

This is another vegetable for readers in warm climates, plants growing best in damp environments or even shallow water. The supplier, Phoenix Seeds, suggests lowland tropics during the wet season as the ideal growing situation. Kang kong for the uninitiated is not a relative of King Kong but of the sweet potato! It is a trailing ground cover, the vine reaching about 50 cm (20 in). Young shoots may be eaten raw, mature leaves are delicious lightly steamed.

EARLY BRASSICAS FOR WINTER FEASTING

Although it's summer now is the time to sow seed from this slow growing family if you want to harvest in early winter. Don't forget to dig in plenty of compost or manure before transplanting, the results will be well worth it.

Brussels Sprouts: summer sowing varieties include the tradi-

tional Early Large from Specialty Seeds, and the amazing Rubine, a coloured variety that remains red after cooking and whose leaves may be used as a garnish. Plants mature in 100 days, and seed is available from Kings Seeds.

Broccoli: a hardy variety for year-round sowing is Green Sprouting from Diggers Seeds. It produces bluish-green small heads with an extra bonus of small delicious side shoots. But if it is the unusual that takes your eye then consider Erica Vale's Romanesco, it produces unique shaped little 'sprouts' that can be snapped off individually or in small bunches so you only take what you need. This is an ideal variety for single people.

Cauliflowers: we're all familiar with the white-headed varieties but did you know that there is a coloured one as well? Purple Head from Phoenix Seeds turns bright green when cooked – will cauliflower au gratin ever be the same again? Purchase seed now for autumn sowing. Traditional white-headed varieties suitable for summer sowing include Phenomenal and Early Phenomenal from Eden Seeds, the latter being one for warm climates. Broerson Seeds also list Phenomenal Early plus Snowball, a fast maturing variety, and Paleface, a large slow grower that can be planted year round.

Suppliers

Eden Seeds, MS 316, Gympie 4570. Ph: 071-865-230.

Erica Vale Aust, PO Box 50, Jannali 2226.

Broerson Seeds and Bulbs, 365-367 Monbulk Road, Silvan 3795. Ph: 03-737-9202.

Kings Seeds, PO Box 14, Glenbrook 2773.

Phoenix Seeds, PO Box 9, Stanley 7331. Ph: 004-581-105.

Specialty Seeds, PO Box 34, Hawksburn 3142. Ph: 03-633-448.

Diggers Seeds, 105 Latrobe Pde, Dromana 3936. Ph: 059-871-877.

Tea Tree Plants and Seeds, Wallace Rd, Beachmere 4510.

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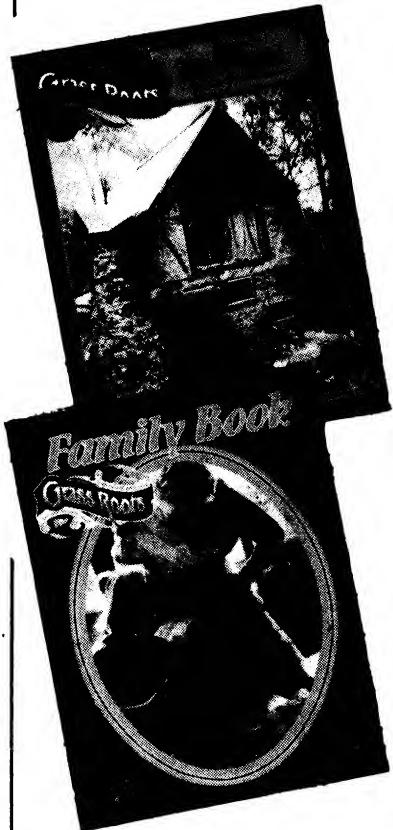
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Earth Builder's Companion

John & Gerry Archer

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p/b 136pp 300 gms

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This is a diverse collection of stories about Australian lifestyles. The readers' stories illustrate how different families adapt their needs to create a lifestyle that is personally satisfying — role reversal, extended families, home birth, birthdays, pets and recycling.

p/b 144pp 300 gms

For prices and post and packing costs
please refer to Guide to Mail Ordering
on page 43.

Bumper Book

The *Bumper Book* is a special Christmas publication in which readers have come together in the true spirit of Christmas and have shared their thoughts, philosophies and ways of living. It has stories on self-sufficiency and instructions on how to make Christmas gifts.

p/b 136pp 250 gms



Fireside Reader

This book is packed with stories and practical information. Stories of how winter used to be as well as plenty of up-to-date crafts and activities such as growing trees for firewood, embroidery, making jams, crosswords, knit a pair of slippers and make your own earrings.

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CALCULATING POULTRY FEEDS

by N Wittenbach, Pakenham, Vic.

Reading the article by John Dobson ('Rations for Poultry', GR 72) prompted me to look out a calculator I used and sent to the Agriculture Department in the 60's. The older members of the department thought it was a good idea but I got the feeling that the younger ones felt it would prompt farmers to mix their own inadequate feeds. I do not think it was ever published.

I have no argument with John's calculation of suitable poultry rations except that it does not solve the economic feed problem for poultry. I have not found that milled feeds leave any economic margin for error. To survive you must be extremely selective with disease, culling and ageing. There is no doubt that feed millers can accurately ascertain the contents of their feed. But is it always what the birds require? I remember a disastrous outbreak of 'Q' disease (which I think was later called fatty heart and liver disease) apparently caused by an imbalance between fish meal and meat meal in high protein feeds. It appears that at the time the fish meal, which caused the problem, was cheaper than meat meal but the total content of the milled feed was correct. We had to grin and bear the error.

Now it is common knowledge that poultry still have the ability, which humans no longer have, to adjust their diet to suit their own body needs if presented ad lib with a great variety of foods. The colour of the food can also change ingestion practices. Remember that poultry have no teeth. Their food is ground in the gizzard by hard stone, which may have to be supplied. It is then up to the breed to perform as required by the farmer under the conditions which he supplies. The problem remains an economic one. Which food? At what price?

The main components of food for poultry are very similar to that for humans – protein, fats and carbohydrates, fibre, minerals and vitamins. If you can select from a wide variety of foods then the minerals and vitamins will not cause any problems, but there are many natural products on the market



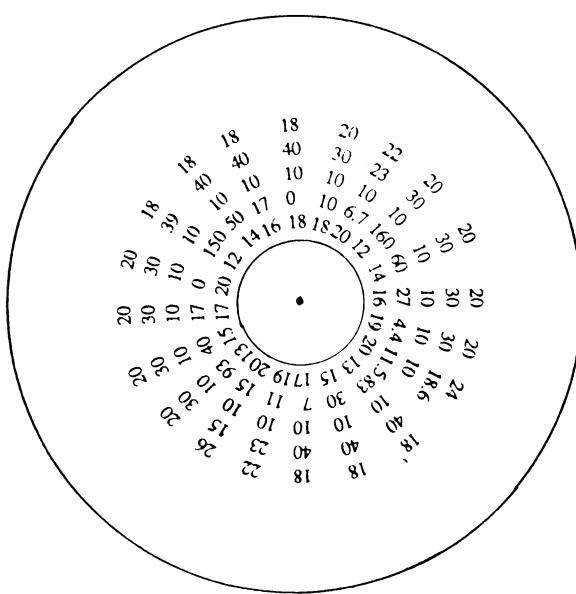
which could be added in minute quantities if any deficiency is detected.

The major protein products are: meat meal, or meat and bone meal, and fish meal which contain 45 to 55 percent protein; dried milk powder about 30 percent; bran and pollard with 15 percent; that is, one part of meal can be replaced by 1.5 parts of milk powder, or three parts of bran or pollard by weight. To do this economically the milk powder would have to be 66 percent the cost of the meal, and the bran and pollard 33 percent the cost. The meals contain small amounts of carbohydrates while the others contain 50-60 percent. If no milk powder or bone meal is used then a small amount of lime should be added if shell grit is not supplied. Sunflower and linseed fall into the bran and pollard group but contain about 34 percent fat. It is doubtful that these could be purchased economically, but could be grown yourself. Too much protein is wasteful and causes wet droppings, with associated problems.

Grains form the next group of foods. They all contain 9-11 percent of protein, except rice, and have about the same carbohydrate content – 60-70 percent. They are all short in fats except maize and oats with 5 percent. So buy wisely on grains, comparing costs with weights. They are quite often sold by the bushel whose weight can change from season to season depending on the FAQ established.

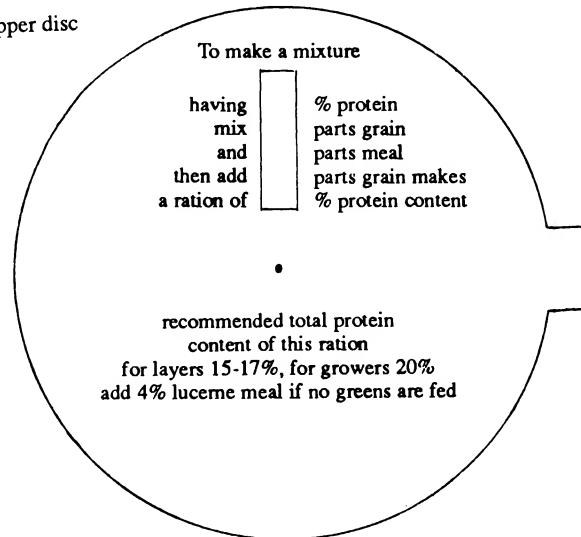
Having decided what feed you are going to use, how much are you going to use? How do you feed it? This is where the

Lower disc



Photocopy the two discs, cut out and paste onto cardboard to preserve them. Place smaller disc on top of larger and secure through centre with eyelet so that they can rotate on each other, allowing each column of figures to be read in the window of the upper disc.

Upper disc



calculator comes into use. Remember that the number of eggs and extent of body weight gain depend upon the amount of food eaten. You have a choice of two methods of feeding:

- Place the complete feed in front of the birds all day.
- Feed a concentrated mash (wet or dry), mixed with some molasses for variety, in the morning and top up with the grain in the evening.

The calculator can do both but I have found that more weight of feed should be fed in the morning than the afternoon. Do not forget the green feed, shell grit and hard grit.

For more information there is an article on Poultry Rations in GR 72.

EGG SHELLS FOR THE GARDEN

Don't throw your egg shells out, they are an excellent source of calcium and magnesium and can be added to mulch or the compost heap. They do take a long time to break down but this can be speeded up if they are first dried out and crushed into tiny pieces with a rolling pin. Do this in a paper bag or you will have pieces everywhere. Add the crushed pieces to your compost – they mix well in this finer shape – or use directly around any vegetables or herbs you suspect to be short of calcium or magnesium.

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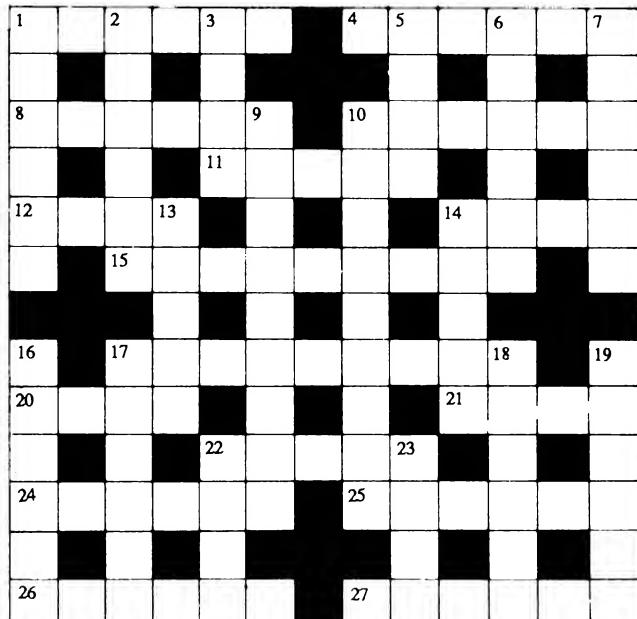
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CRYPTIC GRASSWORD

by M. Riley, Newborough, Vic.

- Across
1. Condemned mother to Ned (6).
 4. Convince as certain (6).
 8. Rendezvous for even us (6).
 10. It works overtime, for another nest egg? (6).
 11. Firesucker (5).
 12. Food found in larger icebox (4).
 14. Comfortable about guns (4).
 15. Said to be formerly ironed (9).
 17. Al went to chemist for gold seeker (9).
 20. Lean another way (4).
 21. Therefore gore differently (4).
 22. Senseless for Annie to change (5).
 24. Interior of Finland (6).
 25. Plot in Eden (6).
 26. European found in a different manger (6).
 27. Kept hidden from secretary (6).

- Down
1. They work with airline in the main (6).
 2. Threaten men with an ace (6).
 3. Seek to make sufficient (4).
 5. Thus, for a close-up (4).
 6. Not the type to be mean (6).
 7. One hug could be sufficient (6).
 9. Take my word for it, it marks the hour (9).
 10. Using, assuming less as understudy (9).
 13. A way to punish (5).
 14. Dress ensemble has feeling (5).
 16. Soaring, but why in a fling (6).
 17. You could get ahead with this horn (6).
 18. Dealer returned red art (6).
 19. Bent on making hat (6).
 22. Can I be an Indian (4).
 23. Release from pain within (4).



- Solution on page 58.

Poetry

WEDDING

I wanted to hold you here
Safe
To hold your warm hair
Hard against my empty nest
You wore white dress
Shining eyes
Embroidered lace veil
I knew it
Some things are too
Perfect
To be real
Julie L Bennett

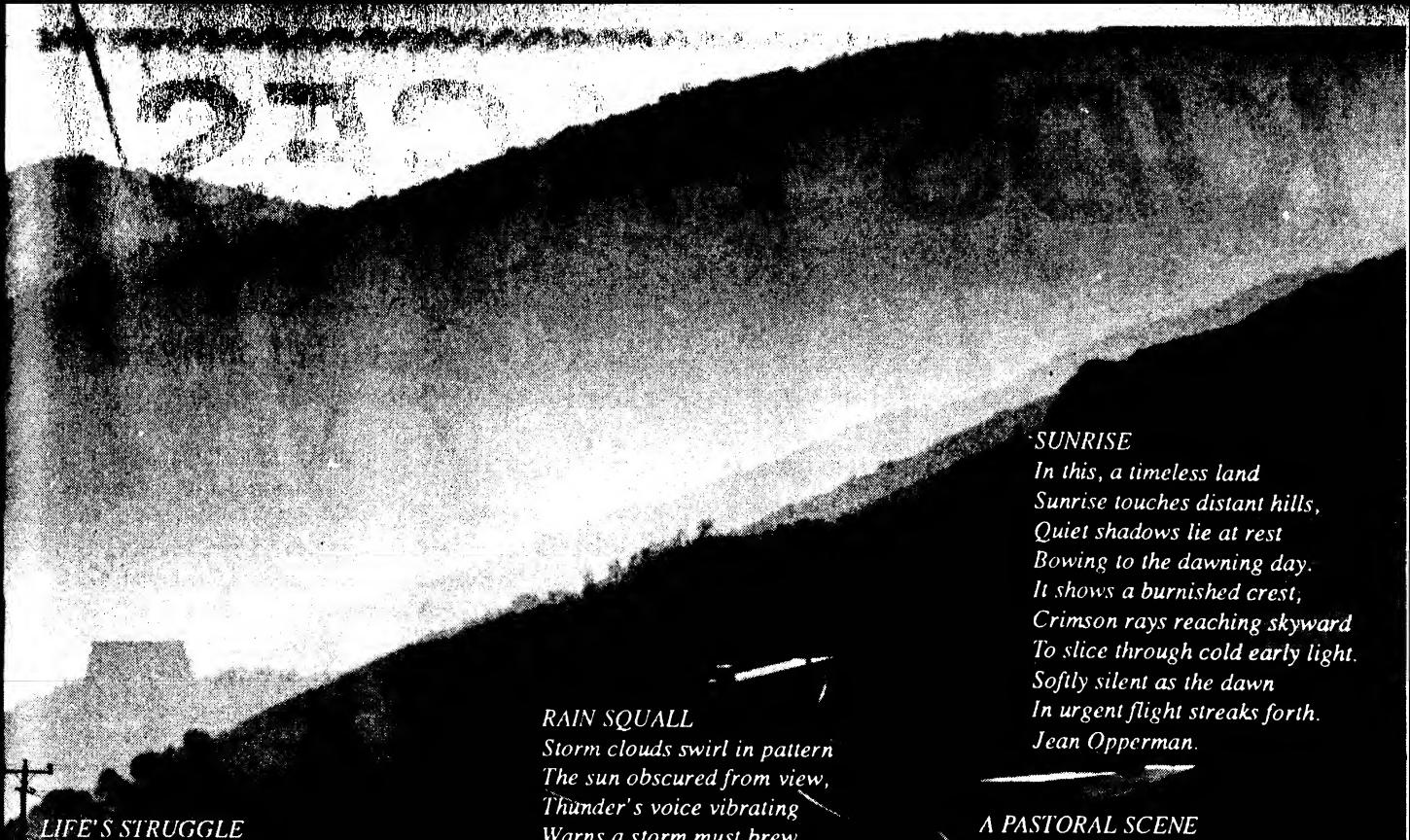
A silver paint brush
Sketching shadowy patterns.
A Picasso moon.
D B Williams.

STORM OVER THE FARM

The summer heat is oppressive
And nobody wants to work,
If only the rain would come
We could all get on with our chores.
The chooks have hidden under the house
And can't be enticed to lay,
The sun beats down relentlessly
And the forecast is for more of the same.
The paddocks are barren, dusty and dry
Our stock are standing forlorn,
The prices have crashed, we're almost beat
And ol' Jonesy predicts more doom.
But the clouds have appeared,
The breeze is strong, stirring leaves,
With gasps of disbelief
We turn our eyes to the sky.
Thunder rolls in the distant hills,
Echoing through the valley,
Raindrops fall heavy and hard
And drown out our cries of joy.
Linda Brown.

NOT SO EARLY MORNING

Smell of damp grass,
My gumboots make a sucking noise
As I tread to rescue my wind blown clothes
Hanging like soggy puppets
From my washing line.
A black and white chicken
In front of me,
Has scrambled from my compost heap;
He seems to think I mind.
We glance each other over in silence.
The peahens clean their feathers
Seem to apologise for their plainness
As the peacocks strut by,
Arrogant beauty,
Looks of disdain.
I am late in rising,
The sky is a forlorn grey.
No sun over the sea.
There is rain on the wind
That whips at my hair.
The birds have supped
At my yellow-seeded pokers long ago,
When I was lazily dreaming.
The early morning bird rituals are over,
Without me.
Janie Wilson.



LIFE'S STRUGGLE

In a silent world of green
There are many things unseen,
Fighting, feasting, flitting
From breathing branches of groaning
Trees, to a forest floor that moves.
Biting bats, stinging gnats
Rampant flowers trumpeting,
Flaunting their brief beauty amidst
Their thorns.
Birds with beating wings fly up
At crashing beasts with gilded horns,
Elusive prey in flight,
From the claws, teeth and gripping bite
Of snarling hunters that stalk the night.
Ferocious struggles
Of being alive and fighting.

R Grant

GHOST

Caught there –
Sudden in the beam's swung path,
Huge silverhoared,
Frozen in light,
Clinging to shadow she whispered from sight.
And then, from the silence,
The wings' hushed breath,
Eyes of the furnace,
The death curved prow –
Scream of the great forest Powerful Owl.

Francis Healy.

RAIN SQUALL

Storm clouds swirl in pattern
The sun obscured from view,
Thunder's voice vibrating
Warns a storm must brew.
Notes of birds a-twitter
Awaiting the thunder's crash
Searching trees for shelter
Fearing the rain's fierce lash.
Later the deluge weakens
Pools with raindrops dance,
Deep gutters awash like rivers
Cover a wide expanse.

Jean Opperman

BOAT

Felled
tree
leaves
space
wood
shaped
to
wind
over
water
warped
reflections.

B A Pascoe.

SUNRISE

In this, a timeless land
Sunrise touches distant hills,
Quiet shadows lie at rest
Bowing to the dawning day.
It shows a burnished crest,
Crimson rays reaching skyward
To slice through cold early light.
Softly silent as the dawn
In urgent flight streaks forth.
Jean Opperman.

A PASTORAL SCENE

O cat with idyllic gaze
How you adore the sun's rays
Methinks you think
The world does end
With you
But still, thou art such a lovely friend.
Pam Boyd.

A PROMISE

Blue was the sky
Brightly shone the sun
Yellow in the breeze waved the wattle
Distant smell of bushfire
Smoke dark and awesome filled the horizon
Red rage of heat as a river ran
The forest lay bare soot black
Ash was the wattle blown about in the breeze
Rain, water reflecting dark sky
Puddles to rivers ran swallowed by thirsty earth
Time – movement under the ground
New life – emergent form
Green the forest now, where once was black
Young shoots of a new promise
Seeds of a new beginning
Yellow in the breeze will the wattle be
Under brightly shining sun
A dove hovers above in the blue sky
David Cowen.

KIDS PAGES

Suni is away with friends having lots of fun so there is no letter from her this issue. She will be back writing next issue.



Dear Suni,

When I get bored I love to read the contents to look for the Kids Pages. I think it's fun to read the activities and jokes. I have a garden with vegetables in it. My mum's dog is going to have pups and I'm getting one, I'll probably call it Scruff. We have lots of chicks too. I have to go now. Bye.

Elise Smith

GASCOYNE JUNCTION WA.

FANTASTIC FEATHERED FACTS

Birds are really amazing creatures, as these facts show. Young swallows are actually 25% bigger than their parents, because of all the reserves of food they eat, and shrink in size as they grow older. Parrots are not only good talkers but good listeners too. During World War I they were kept on the Eiffel Tower in Paris to warn of approaching aircraft. Female wrens are very particular about their homes – sometimes the male will have to build up to a dozen nests before his mate chooses the one she's happy with. And the African eagle has better brakes than most cars. Flying as fast as 160 kph, it can stop in just 6 m. Seagulls are great flyers too – they can cover 1100 km in a day, at speeds of up to 80 kph.

COOKS CORNER

QUICK PIZZA

Although not a true pizza this yummy version can be made in minutes using whatever you have in the fridge.

small wholemeal pita bread
tomato or spaghetti sauce
sliced cold meat – sausage, salami, etc
sliced rings of onion and green pepper
sliced pineapple
sliced mozzarella cheese



Spread the pita bread (do not cut open) with 1-2 teaspoons of tomato or spaghetti sauce. Place on it slices of meat, onion, pepper and pineapple. Sprinkle with herbs if you like a herby flavour – basil, oregano or even mixed herbs would be suitable. Cover with cheese slices. Place on a biscuit tray and cook in a medium oven for 10-20 minutes or until the cheese is melted and bubbling. You can use a grill if you're not allowed to use the oven – just place the pizza under the heat and keep a close watch on it so the cheese does not burn. Cut into wedges and eat. Delicious.



KOALA

IN THE COURTYARD

by Bradley Horsfall (aged 9),
Euroa, Vic.

It was 3.30 on Sunday morning when I was awoken by a scratching at the playroom door. I jumped out of bed, grabbed a heavy book, and headed towards where the sound was coming from, expecting to be face to face with a burglar, but just outside the door there was a koala.

After staring at it in disbelief for a couple of minutes, I put the book away and ran in to wake Mum and Dad. Mum woke up with a bewildered look on her face, Dad was already half awake, and jumped straight out of bed and walked sleepily down, with me running ahead.

While all this was happening, the koala had managed to climb down from where it was, to hang from the door handle, so it looked like it was trying to get in. When Dad saw it, he kept going on about how well LandCare works. We then woke up my sister Stacy (waking her took quite a bit of work). She walked like a zombie down to the playroom and stared with wide eyes at the koala. After looking at it for about 10 minutes, we all went back to bed, expecting it to be gone in the morning.

In the morning, Kenny Koala was still there (but not hanging from the door handle). He was sitting looking in through my bedroom window with a confused look on his face. We couldn't tell whether it was a boy or girl because it held its front paws over its lower abdomen, but it was big, so we thought it was a male, so we called him Kenny.

We had twelve people and one dog over to look at it as it sat there all through Sunday. Early Monday morning it grunted and left. Now all that remains to prove that there was a koala there is a pile of koala droppings.

TIN CAN STILTS

Most parents can remember the fun they had on these noisy homemade stilts which cost next to nothing to make but provided hours and hours of fun. You will need:

2 tins of the same size (Milo ones are good)

hammer and nail, scissors

2 lengths of string each about as tall as you

• Punch a nail hole on each side of the unopened or bottom end of the tins.

• Thread string through the holes in each tin. Tie knots so the string won't pull through, the knots being inside the tins.

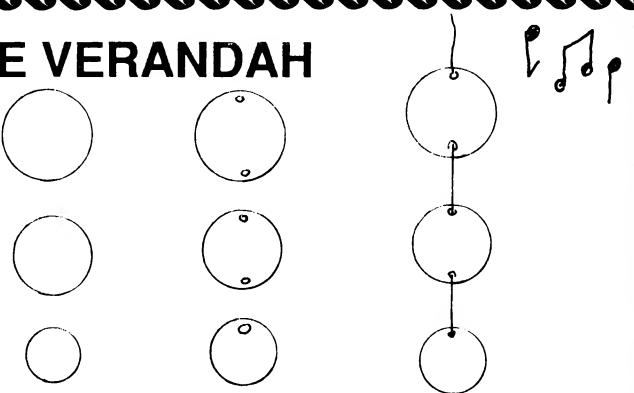
• Pull the strings up, stand on the tins, hold the strings tight and walk.



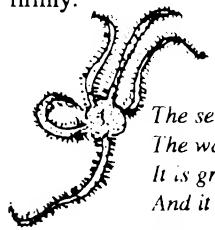
CHIMES FOR THE VERANDAH

It is easiest to use different sized lids from tin cans for this. If your family doesn't have any ask neighbours and friends to save a variety for you. You will need:

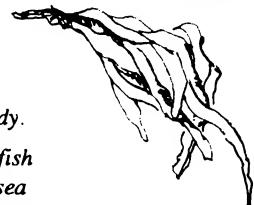
different sized tin can lids
string or fishing line
straight stick between 20 and 30 cm long
hammer and a nail



- Hammer a small hole on either edge of all but four lids, which will be the bottom part of the chimes and only need one hole
- Thread the fishing line/thread through each individual lid, starting with a firm knot at a bottom lid and working upwards, allowing about 1-3 cm between individual lids. The chimes will hold more firmly if you make one or two knots at the top of each lid.
- With the remaining thread tie string of chimes onto the stick firmly.



The sea is unusual
The water is salty
It is greeny blue
And it doesn't go mouldy.



There are hundreds of fish
And people fish in the sea
They take them home again
And eat them at tea.



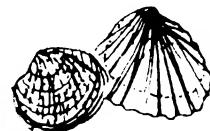
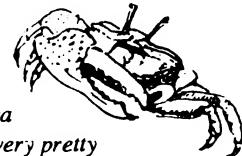
Lots of things live in the sea
Octopi, sharks, sea-horses and seaweed
These are just some friends
That we can help feed.

THE SEA

Sand and rocks are on the bottom of the sea
People look at the bottom and reckon it's very pretty
They can see shells, stingrays and coral
The sun shines and it makes the sea glittery.

We can make sand-castles on the beach
Where the water can splash down
We found some shells and put them on
And dug a moat that went around and around.

The waves have white spray on them
When they wash all the sand into the sea
And all the shellfish go back in too
So they can have slugs for tea.



by Years 1, 2, 3, Deanmill Primary School, WA, and Wendy Quilty (pictured below).



While the Billy Boils... . . .

A successful growing season in our garden has resulted in an abundance of fruit and vegetables. Apart from what can be consumed on a day-to-day basis, we all need further ideas on how to make full use of nature's harvest. Our readers have contributed some delicious recipes to help with this perennial problem, so we have printed a cross section here.

STUFFED PEPPERS

- 3 cups finely chopped vegetables
- 2 tbsp oil
- 2 cups cooked grain (rice, lentils)
- 3/4 cup tofu or cottage cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/2 cup grated cheese
- 2 chopped tomatoes
- herbs to taste
- 6 large green or red peppers

Lightly saute vegetables in oil for 5 minutes then stir in rest of ingredients. Let the stuffing cool before filling peppers. Allow one pepper per person. De-stem peppers, cut off tops, remove seeds and add chopped tops to filling. Blanch in boiling water for 10 minutes, stuff and top with extra grated cheese. Place in greased dish and bake for 30 minutes at 160°C (325°F).

Michelle Piper, Undera.

TAMALE PIE

- 2 1/2 cups dried beans, cooked
- 2 red peppers, diced
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 3 cobs sweet corn
- 1 cup tasty cheese, grated
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 2 cups stock or water
- 2 eggs, beaten
- soy sauce to taste

Cut corn from the cobs. Place vegetables in boiling stock and blanch. Strain but keep the liquid. Place vegetables and beans in large oven dish. Cover with grated cheese and keep warm. Bring the liquid to the boil and gradually beat in cornmeal until it thickens. Remove from heat and beat in eggs and soy sauce. Pour this mixture over vegetables and bake in moderate oven until top is cooked and browned, approximately 30 minutes.

Joy Williams, Larnook.

SWEET AND SOUR VEGETABLES

For one Vacola size 20 jar:

- 1 capsicum
- 1/2 cucumber
- 2 onions
- 2 tbsp raw sugar
- 2/3 cup cider vinegar
- 1/3 cup water

Remove stems and seeds from capsicum. Cut all vegetables into finger sized strips and fill jar. Mix sugar, vinegar and water and pour over vegetables. Remove all air bubbles. Seal with rings and lids and clip down. Heat to 78°C (170°F) and hold for 1 1/2 hours, using either conventional Vacola unit, or oven method.

Pam Watson, Galston.

BASQUE TOMATO SAUCE

- 4 med tomatoes
- 1 1/2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp raw sugar
- chopped fresh basil, to taste
- 1 tsp lemon juice

Chop tomatoes and simmer in olive oil for 3 minutes. Sprinkle with sugar and cook a further 5 minutes. Add basil, cook 1 minute then stir in lemon juice well. This sauce is delicious over pasta.

Carol Biggs, Sale.

THICKSHAKE

Place a 200 g (7 oz) carton of natural yoghurt in a blender, add 1 tsp honey and 1 dsp wheatgerm. Now blend a serving of whatever fruit is in season. Make a different flavour each time.

Anonymous

FRUITY ICE CREAM

- 4 eggs, separated
- 1/2 cup icing sugar
- 1 cup cream, whipped
- 1 tsp vanilla
- fruit in season, mashed (for example, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, strawberries, berries, peaches, passionfruit)

Beat 2 of the egg yolks lightly. Beat 4 egg whites until firm, gradually beat in icing sugar. Fold in beaten yolks, then whipped cream. Stir in fruit and vanilla, freeze until set. No second beating required.

Edna Esplin, Wagga Wagga.



TWO FRUITS PRESERVE

- 1 kg (2 lb) peaches/pears
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup honey

Peel, stone and slice fruit and place in large saucepan with water, sugar and honey. Stir over low heat until sugar has dissolved. Bring to boil and continue boiling for 45 minutes or until jam jells. Stir occasionally to prevent jam sticking on base of pan. Whilst jam is cooking, wash jars thoroughly and drain. Place jars upright on tray containing 6 mm (1/2 in) water covering base. Now put tray into a cold oven and heat to 105°C (220°F). When jam is ready pour into the sterilized jars. Allow to cool and seal with melted paraffin wax.

M. Norris, Shepparton.

Please, Not Another Zucchini

by Jenny Martin, Launceston, Tas.

Have you ever uttered these words as yet another bucket of zucchini was deposited on the kitchen bench? No doubt you have faced the whole range of these prolific vegetables – from the huge marrow which has remained undetected for several weeks to the tiny fingerlings picked in a desperate effort to stem the avalanche. Well, what do you do with that seemingly never-ending flow of this summer vegetable? First of all, be thankful for its versatility – it can be used in so many ways. Eat it raw or cooked, sliced, stuffed or grated, in soups, casseroles and cakes, frozen or pickled.

SOUPS

Zucchini soup is an excellent way to use the larger zucchini.

Cream of Zucchini Soup

Chop zucchini, onion and a large potato and place in a saucepan. Cover with stock or water and cook until tender. Puree. Add a can of evaporated milk and reheat gently. Garnish with chopped parsley or chives, crisp fried bacon bits or crunchy croutons. Vary this basic soup as you wish. Try frying the vegetables in butter and a little curry powder before adding the liquid, or including other vegetables like carrot.

Mrs Morris's Zucchini Bisque

5 cups chicken stock
3 cups sliced zucchini
1 large onion, chopped
2 tbsp rice
1 tsp curry powder
1/2 tsp ground ginger
1/2 tsp dry mustard
salt and pepper
1 cup milk

Place first seven ingredients in a pot, simmer for 20 minutes, and cool. Blend until smooth, season, then chill. Just before serving stir in the milk. Garnish with a little sour cream and some chopped spring onion.

SALADS

Salads are good summer fare. Try these.

Zucchini with Orange and Date

Finely slice small zucchini and place in a salad bowl with chopped orange flesh and chopped dates. Pour over an oil and vinegar dressing with some finely chopped spring onion added. Chill for an hour before serving.

Lemon Salad Dressing

1/3 cup olive oil
juice of a large lemon
1 dsp chopped mint
1 tbsp chopped chives or spring onion
1 clove of garlic, crushed

Shake well together before using.

Marinated Vegetables

1 large capsicum, cut in strips
3 medium carrots, thinly sliced
2 small zucchini, thinly sliced
125 g (4 oz) green beans
1 cup each of cauliflower and broccoli flowerets



5 spring onions, cut in 5 cm (2 in) pieces
lemon dressing

Lightly steam all the vegetables except the onions. When still slightly crisp drain and rinse in cold water. Place in a bowl, pour dressing over and marinate for at least 4 hours. A cup of sliced mushrooms is a good addition.

Marinated Zucchini

4 large zucchini
1 cup olive oil
1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
1 tbsp chopped basil
1 tbsp chopped parsley
1 cup vinegar

Cut zucchini in 2 cm (1 in) pieces, fry gently and drain. Layer zucchini, garlic, herbs and oil in a glass or earthenware dish. Boil the vinegar for 5 mins and pour over the zucchini. Leave for 12 hours. This will keep for 2 weeks in the refrigerator.

Zucchini and Asparagus

Slice zucchini and steam until barely tender. Steam 3 cm (1 1/4 in) lengths of green beans. Drain vegetables and toss with drained asparagus cuts and walnut pieces. Add French dressing.

VEGETABLES

When zucchini is the accompanying vegetable on the menu for days on end it is good to be able to vary the way in which it is offered.

Zucchini with Tomatoes

Layer sliced tomatoes and zucchini in an ovenproof dish with a little sauteed onion and garlic and some grated cheese between the layers. Top with more cheese and breadcrumbs. Dot with butter and bake in a moderate oven for 1 hour.

Lemon Zucchini

Zucchini cut in 1 cm (1/2 in) rounds
2 tbsp margarine
1 small onion, finely chopped
1/2 tsp finely grated lemon rind
2-3 tbsp lemon juice
1/2 cup chopped parsley

Steam the zucchini until just tender. Fry the onions in the margarine until soft. Add the other ingredients and toss lightly.

Zucchini Casserole

1 cm (1/2 in) cubes of zucchini
1 onion, chopped and fried in 2 tbsp butter
60 g (2 oz) grated cheese

salt and pepper

2 eggs, beaten

1 cup soft breadcrumbs mixed with 1 tbsp melted butter

Combine all except the crumbs and pour into a greased casserole dish. Top with crumbs. Bake at 150°C (300°F) for 30-40 minutes.

Zucchini and Carrot

Coarsely grate zucchini and carrot. Melt 1 tbsp butter and add a small clove of crushed garlic. Toss the vegetables in this over a low heat for 5 minutes.

Zucchini Matches

Cut small zucchini into strips. Sprinkle with salt and leave for 20 minutes. Drain and dry. Shake in seasoned flour and deep fry for a few seconds.

Zucchini Fritters

These are delicious, but fattening and definitely out for those on a low cholesterol diet. Make a batter of 125 g (4 oz) plain flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 1 egg, 1 tbsp olive oil and 150 ml (1/4 pt) water. Slice zucchini to 1/2 cm (1/4 in) thickness. Salt for half an hour. Drain and dry, dip in batter and deep fry.

Baked Zucchini

Halve small zucchini lengthwise. Score the tops diagonally and spread with butter. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and paprika and bake for 15-20 minutes at 180°C (350°F).

Ratatouille

Zucchini is delicious in ratatouille – that stew of eggfruit, onion, tomato, capsicum and zucchini. It can be served hot or cold or try using it in Pan Bagna. Cut a thick French loaf in halves and dip the cut sides in olive oil. Rub with garlic and spread half generously with ratatouille. Put the other half on top and weigh it down overnight. You may like to remove some of the crumb from the bread before filling it. Great cold for picnics, or heat in oven and serve with soup and salad.

Vegetable Sauce

2 large green peppers, sliced

6 tomatoes, skinned and sliced

2 zucchini, thinly sliced

1 eggplant, cubed

1 cup chopped celery

3 onions, chopped

2 tbsp oil

Simmer all together for 1 hour and serve over pasta.

Savoury Zucchini

2 kg (4½ lb) zucchini

1 cup uncooked rice

1 med onion, chopped

1 clove of garlic

400 g (14 oz) can tomatoes with juice

½ small capsicum, sliced

Fry the onion. Add other ingredients with 1½ cups of water and cook slowly until the rice is tender.

BAKING

Zucchini Cake

3 eggs

1½ cups brown sugar

1 cup oil

125 g (4 oz) walnut pieces

1½ cups grated zucchini

1½ cups wholemeal SR flour

1½ cups white plain flour

Beat eggs, sugar and oil together until the colour changes. Stir in the other ingredients and place in two well greased 20 x 10 cm (18 x 4 in) loaf tins. Cook in moderate oven for 45 mins.

JAMS AND PICKLES

Pickle some of the excess or make into jam. They'll keep well, and in six months time you may even enjoy the thought of zucchini!

Zucchini and Ginger Jam

2 kg (4½ lb) zucchini, peeled and cut in 1 cm (½ in) cubes

2 kg (4½ lb) sugar

40 g (1½ oz) root ginger

5 large lemons

Sprinkle the zucchini with a quarter of the sugar and leave overnight. Bruise the ginger with a rolling pin. Grate zest from three lemons and squeeze the juice from all five. Place everything except the remaining sugar in a pan and simmer for 30 minutes until the zucchini is transparent. Add the sugar and boil rapidly until setting point is reached. Remove ginger, bottle and seal.

Pickled Zucchini

500 g (1 lb) zucchini, finely sliced

500 g (1 lb) onion, finely sliced

2 tbsp salt

½ cup sugar

½ cup white vinegar

1 tbsp mustard seeds

1 tsp turmeric

Sprinkle zucchini and onion with salt and leave 2 hours. Rinse and drain well. Combine sugar, vinegar, mustard seeds and turmeric. Stir over low heat until sugar is dissolved, then bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the vegetables and simmer for a further 5 minutes. Bottle, cool and seal.

Pineapple and Zucchini Pickle

500 g (1 lb) can crushed pineapple

2 zucchini, thinly sliced

2 onions, thinly sliced

1¼ cups white vinegar

250 g (8 oz) sugar

1 tbsp salt

1 tbsp curry powder

juice of 1 lemon

Combine all ingredients and cook until clear – 40-60 minutes. Bottle and seal.

Still don't want to see another zucchini for six months? Well, you could pick the flowers and stuff them with a savoury rice mixture, or chop them finely and add to scrambled eggs. That will head off the crop before it starts!

Respect the humble zucchini – it has so much to offer.



THE REWARDING ART OF FORGERY

Or, How to Bend Steel to Your Will

by J Boetje, Brooweenya, Qld.

In this day of high-tech processes and sophisticated machinery, the humble forge has almost faded from memory. It is easy to forget the awe instilled by the forging process in the early days of metal technology, and the mystical, magical reverence generated by the original smiths.

The magic is still available, even today. The forge is not the simplest tool to master – in the hands of a novice it can fuse or distort steel in an instant – but those prepared to make themselves familiar with forging processes will have, at absolute minimum cost, a tool of incredible power and versatility. With nothing more than a handful of charcoal, and ‘the muscles of his brawny arm’ anyone can shape, bend, weld, sharpen and harden steel into the desired form. All it requires is a little know-how!

THE FORGE ITSELF

The only real requirements for a forge are a charcoal bed and a forced draft of air. Depending on your resources, these may be achieved in a number of ways:

- If you live in a district that has old farming properties, it is worth prospecting for old, discarded hand forges. Most properties had a forge, few of them are still being used, and you may possibly pick one up for a few dollars (or a few beers). Often the hearth tray will be missing but if the blower mechanism is OK, or repairable, the forge can be easily rebuilt.
- A hearth tray may be fashioned from an old plough disc, or from a car rim lined with clay. The air entrance must be from beneath the centre of the hearth, with provision made for removal of any slag or clinker that may fall through the grate.
- The grate may be of any material suitable to support the burning charcoal. It will be kept reasonably cool by the airflow, but a fine wire screen will have only a short life due to the hot environment and continual impact from ‘irons in the fire’. I suggest material no thinner than 6 mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) and a sheet of steel closely drilled with 10 mm ($\frac{2}{5}$ in) holes is fine.
- The airflow may be produced by a hand operated blower, as in the old hand forges. This allows the most precise and delicate control of the airflow and thus the input of heat. Traditionalists may like to construct a bellows, still a viable air pump.
- A concession to modern technology will allow the use of a powered air blower. Vacuum cleaners are OK, but noisy and often too powerful. The 12V fan from a car heater is an excellent compromise, being cheap, readily available and silent. It can be powered from your car battery via a long lead and crocodile clips. If a powered blower is in use, a blast gate or butterfly valve must be provided in the pipework to control the airflow.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

It is important to set up your forge in an area that is fireproof, with easy access. An area shaded from bright sunlight makes it easier to judge the steel heat and the tempering colours. A hood and chimney are not strictly necessary, but will keep the area (and the operator) much cooler.

Some kind of anvil is required, but genuine ones are becoming rare (and expensive). A good substitute may be made from a piece of heavy steel H-beam, or one end of an old wagon axle. Conserve the best you can, because a stable anvil is important. Support it firmly on a heavy timber post, at a height where your forearm is horizontal when the hammer face touches the anvil.

A selection of hammers will accumulate around your forge. A pair of leather gauntlets will help in handling large workpieces when hot, but tongs or pliers will be needed for the smaller jobs. One unique quality of the forge is that most of the hand tools may be made in the forge itself. (Doctor, heal thyself?) Most experienced operators have made an assortment of tools to suit different jobs and when you get to this stage it will be necessary to have some kind of rack to hold the tools so they are handy to the job.

USING THE FORGE

Starting Out

Several previous articles in *Grass Roots* cover production of charcoal. If necessary hose off your next BBQ fire, but have enough charcoal to make a 75-100 mm (3-4 in) layer over the entire hearth. Clear the grate area and light a small fire with paper and twigs, then apply a gentle air blast and gradually add pieces of charcoal until the region above the grate is a mass of burning coals. Then spread more charcoal in a layer over the hearth to contain the heat and have on hand plenty of pre-warmed fuel. Once a well-designed forge is properly alight the blast may be minimised until more heat is needed.

How to Shape and Bend

The simplest, most straightforward forge process is the shaping of steel, and this is accomplished by heating the appropriate part to red heat, then forming as desired. Place the part to be heated above the grate, heap more charcoal around the steel and increase the blast. Make sure the steel remains well submerged under a layer of charcoal, away from the air, so that the surface does not become oxidised.

Withdraw the workpiece from time to time, to evaluate the degree of heat, and relocate it in a slightly different position if necessary. Take care not to burn the steel. A forge is incredibly powerful, far more so than any oxy-acetylene torch, and the uninitiated can buckle or melt the workpiece without being aware of it.

Once the steel has reached red heat it may easily be manipulated by bending and twisting, or struck between hammer and anvil to flatten or shape to the desired form. Limited only by your imagination, these processes can transform humble steel stock sections into individual sculptural shapes, or turn otherwise scrap steel into useful – and valuable – tools.

How to Sharpen Tools

The sharpening of picks, crowbars, cold chisels etc. is a simple extension of the forming process. The main danger is the

possibility of burning the thin edge of the tool, and you must take care to reduce the blast or to withdraw the tool from the heat before it 'overcooks'. A helpful trick is to position the tool a little past the grate, so that the maximum heat lies behind the edge.

Overworking of the thin cutting edge will lead to cracks so leave the final shaping of the edge till last. Hammer the tool from alternate sides to avoid altering the angle of the cutting edge, and give some heavy blows to the body of the tool above the cutting edge to maintain the original taper. A couple of good blows on an edge that is almost cool will leave it razor sharp. The tool is now ready for hardening and tempering.

How to Harden Tools

This process is probably the most valuable achieved by using a forge, the only alternative being a temperature-controlled furnace or salt bath. It is also subject to the most folklore, the traditional blacksmith having developed empirical methods that have until recently matched or bettered the understanding of metallurgical science.

It is important to realise that ordinary mild steel is not affected by heat treatment, only high-carbon tool steels and alloy steels respond to the hardening/tempering process. When such a steel is cooled slowly from red heat it remains in a soft state and is referred to as *annealed*. When it is heated, then cooled quickly by placing in a bath of water or oil, it is *quenched* and attains its maximum hardness. Unfortunately in this state it is too brittle to use, and a little of this hardness must be sacrificed to make the steel tough. This process is called *tempering*.

If you were sharpening, say, a cold chisel, you would reheat it, after sharpening, to a dull red and quench it in cold water, bringing it to maximum hardness. To evaluate the tempering process, it is necessary to file or grind a smooth bright area on the tool near the edge. A container of sand is then placed in the forge and surrounded by charcoal. As the sand is heated, it

must be continually stirred to maintain a uniform temperature within its mass. The tool is placed in the sand – with continual stirring – to be reheated slowly. Make frequent observations of the bright area, and watch its colour change until it indicates the required degree of hardness. The tool can then be quenched in water. This traditional method is controllable and reliable, resulting in a tool with an even degree of hardness throughout, but is awkward to accomplish with larger workpieces.

For the more adventurous, there is a shortcut which streamlines the sharpening, quenching and tempering into one smooth operation. It has the advantage of producing a tool with correct cutting edge hardness but maximum toughness in the shank. There is a little more difficulty in judging the correct hardness, but most experienced forge operators work this way.

After sharpening is complete, a bright area is filed down the body of the tool to the tip and the tool is returned briefly to the forge. When dull red, the tool is removed and about 20 mm (7/8 in) of the cutting line is quenched in water. It is then necessary to watch the bright area carefully. As heat retained in the body of the tool is conducted towards the tip it begins to self-temper and when the colour at the tip is correct the tool is quenched, to 'freeze' the hardness spectrum developed within the tool. Using this faster method, it is fascinating to watch the colours 'run' down the shank to the tip, and exciting to 'catch' it with the second quench at just the right moment – if you miss you must anneal and start again, but this can be done easily enough. A major benefit is that the shank remains tougher than the cutting edge, resulting in a tool which is much less brittle.

You will no doubt be asking 'well, what is the correct colour?' For each steel alloy there is a recommended quenching medium (oil, water, or air blast) and a recommended soaking temperature, or 'colour'. Such information is not readily available in the back paddock! The following is a general guide for various products made from the usual tool steels:

Straw yellow	230°C (450°F)
Straw brown	240°C (470°F)
Yellow	255°C (490°F)
Reddish brown	265°C (510°F)
Light purple	275°C (530°F)
Dark purple	290°C (550°F)
Dark blue	300°C (570°F)

Hammer faces, razors, drills	(hard)
Rock drills	:
Knives, shears, scissors	:
Wood tools, twist drills	:
Cold chisels, axes	:
Screwdrivers	:
Springs, saws	(tough)

Bear in mind that the 'proof of the pudding' is how the tool reacts in use. If the tool is too soft the edge will dull quickly, and if too hard the cutting edge will crack or flake away. Even though you must repeat the whole annealing/quenching/tempering process, it is quick and easy to adjust your tempering colour to suit that particular tool. Remember to make a record of the best for next time!

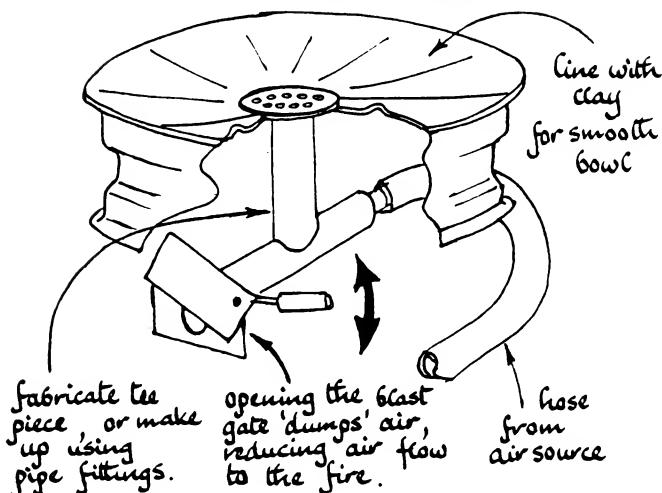
How to Weld in the Forge

Forge welding is a rather specialised process, and the welding of today's light steel sections is best done with today's oxy and arc welding tools – there is no way to forge weld a car body panel! But for joining heavy steel sections forge welding has its advantages, not the least being minimal cost.

First the ends must be prepared, being heated to bright red, thickened (or upset, in forge terminology) and bevelled or scarf'd to fit each other. The ends are then returned together to the forge and heated until 'sparking'. On removal from the forge, the ends should be tapped or rubbed together to dislodge any dirt or scale. Although not essential, a flux of borax may be sprinkled on the matching faces.

Quickly, before any heat is lost, one piece is secured on the anvil, the other held to overlap slightly, then the joint is hammered gently at first, and with increasing force as the joint cools. Do not hammer the joint any thinner than the parent metal. A successful forge weld is homogeneous and strong, achieved more quickly, easily, and cheaply than multi-pass arc

THE 'HOLDEN - RIM' FORGE



welding, and may be finished to size and appearance in one operation.

FORGING AHEAD

Once you are an experienced forge operator you will end up, like me, always on the scrounge for a 'decent bit of steel'. Mild steel available from steel merchants as pipe, strip and bar is OK for decorative items, but it cannot be hardened so it is useless for tools. Alloy steels from steel merchants are too expensive.

The most productive source of cheap high quality steel is the motor car. Hundreds of wrecked vehicles litter the countryside and each one can be a rich resource. Useful components made from high tensile steels are rear axle shafts, leaf and coil springs, gearbox shafts and various forged steering components. Other useful sources are old saw blades, worn out files and light railway line.

If you wish to find out more about forge processes, you will find yourself scrounging for information, just as much as for steel. Get on friendly terms with any person in your district (usually an old-timer) who still uses the forge. Usually they are more than happy to talk about their skills and will offer assistance and demonstrate processes quite willingly. The craft forges(!) strong friendships too.

Written references seem to be limited to old textbooks, and these are getting rare. One fascinating reference of this type is *Practical Blacksmithing* compiled and edited by M T Richardson, Weathervane Books, NY, 1978. This is a re-issue in one volume of four books published in 1889-1891, detailing submissions to the popular journal *The Blacksmith and Wheelwright*. Technical aspects of heat-treatment are given in entry-level metallurgical and workshop technology texts, these being better available in today's libraries.

Often different publications have completely different recommendations. Sometimes the only way is to try the process yourself and see how successful it is – and the experience is worth the minimal amount of time. Happy forgery and remember, whatever you do, don't lose your temper!

CLEANING BOTTLES AND JARS

Place diced potato into the container and shake until clean, then rinse with clean water.

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Shelter From Bushfires

by Ray Toyne, Traralgon, Vic.

As the fires cooled following Ash Wednesday, there was shocked disbelief as our nation recoiled in a grim realisation that, despite the fact of bushfire having always been one of our recurring dangers, we had been totally unprepared. Many pertinent questions were asked and much blame was cast. But in reality were not we all to blame? Was not the lesson there after Black Friday? Has not the lesson been there after every major disaster?

There is much apathy and many false assumptions. It is so easy to sit back and allow ourselves the luxury of not thinking, of not bringing our minds to bear on the problem which is constantly there for us to see. Perhaps those in the bush knew deep down that there was no real protection against the great fires. Today there is little difference, with the exception of the Ash Wednesday invention, the 'Little Beauty' bushfire and cyclone shelter for the safety of human life, Australia's first ever invention for safety in bushfire.

This article is written to help understand the things which happen in bushfire, so that we are more able to choose our course of action, to safeguard our family. I do not give advice on what to do in bushfire because from my work and from my experience, there is only one thing to do – human life is the priority, place it in a place of proven safety. All the rest is second best, that which you do if you do not have a place of safety. This may not please the insurance company lobby groups, but it will please the family when the fire is over.

So where do we begin in the understanding of bushfire? Most of us will easily be able to understand the everyday laws of science that relate to the situation. Fire and its intensity depend upon several factors:

- type and quantity of fuel;
- air to allow combustion;
- ignition.

As all these factors may vary there can be no accurate term 'bushfire'. It is a generalised term only, so to be safe in one bushfire may not mean safety in the next. It is only safe, when planning for future safety, to consider the worst situation as valid. What are the alternative courses of action?

● Evacuate – as we must always take the worst possible situation when planning future safety, evacuation is safe only before the fire actually begins. Imagine being woken in the middle of the night by smoke and noise. Wake children; which way do we drive; where is the fire; are the roads clear; is there more than one fire – the unanswerable questions go on.

● Stay indoors – staying inside a house which may be on fire always, in my opinion, has an element of doubt. With any fire the first consideration is to get people out, the only reason this differs in bushfire is that the fire outside is worse than the one inside. This is not sensible planning for safety. Houses are designed as comfortable places to live and not as fire shelters.

● Get into the dam, tank or creek – may be a problem if far away from the house. What happens when one's head is lifted to breathe? It is just too easy to be choked by a lack of air, or fire and pollution.

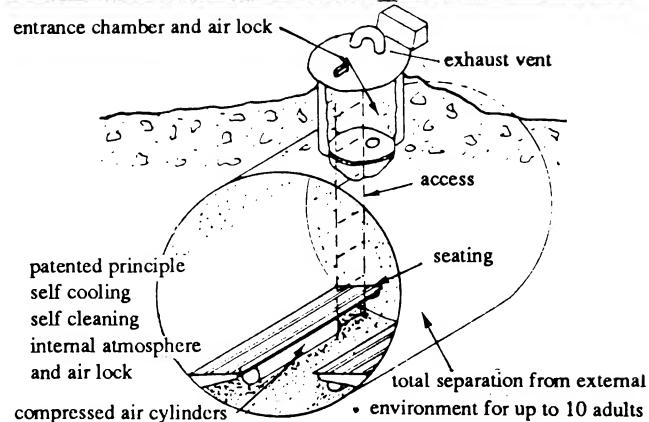
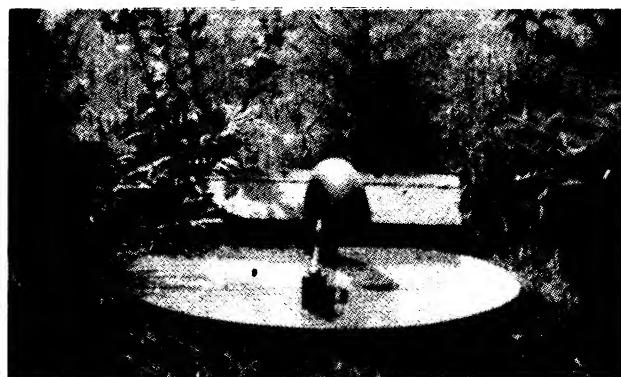
● Go to a place of proven safety – this is the only one I would advise, providing the place of safety is within seconds away.

Such a place should be designed to resist high temperature radiant heat, supply clean breathable air and not allow pollution to enter.

My solution is a patented underground shelter which provides absolute safety at low cost, so that all families may afford safety in bushfire and cyclone. The shelter concept was taken from WWII, when in the London Blitz it was realised that the only logical way to deal with rapidly approaching danger was to provide shelter within seconds.

The 'Little Beauty' accommodates 10 adults for up to 4 hours. It functions using two principles of physics – differential pressures and adiabatic principle of compressed gases. This gives a pure air, constantly cooling, changing atmosphere, totally insulated from the external. It is underground, hardly visible in the garden environment, and allows easy access within seconds for children or adults. It has been tested in actual fire conditions and also against negative external pressures which cause extraction of normal air from buildings.

The shelter consists of a steel and concrete shell 2.5 m long, 1.7 m wide and 1.8 m high (8 x 5½ x 6 ft) connected to an entrance chamber and airlock opening at ground level. It is fitted with seats under which are cylinders of compressed air which provide a pure, breathable atmosphere for the occupants. Lights are battery powered and there is provision for basic tools and an emergency exit. Access is via a ladder. Internal air is ducted from the main chamber and vented through the outer door, which is childproof to prevent accidental locking in.



For more information on the 'Little Beauty' bushfire and cyclone shelter contact Bushbaby Pty Ltd, PO Box 572, Frankston 3199. Ph: 059-713-230.

Making Your Own Liqueurs

by Peter Carr, Goonellabah, NSW.

I have noted, of late, articles on the home production of booze of various types, both soft and otherwise, and thought I might share some recipes for homemade liqueurs with you and enlarge on the methodology of this most laudable of self-sufficiency skills. Some years ago I acquired a most desirable volume called *Liqueurs for All Seasons*, by Emilio Cocconi, in which the claim is made that the only activity simpler than making liqueurs is drinking them. After some painstaking research into this hypothesis, I can testify to its accuracy.

Liqueurs first came into being through the efforts of a 13th century Catalan physician who found that the essences of roots, plants, herbs and fruit parts were soluble in alcohol, and that these could have therapeutic effects as well as the well known effects of the alcohol in which they were dissolved. The Spanish Inquisition is reputed to have viewed these discoveries with alarm and Arnau de Vilanova was only saved from a speedy end by the intercession of the pope of the time whom Arnau had saved with one of his concoctions. In the Middle Ages, monks were active in experimenting with liqueurs and some of the best known and most favoured today, Chartreuse and Benedictine, are made from carefully guarded mediaeval monkish recipes.

All you need to make tasty liqueurs is a supply of alcohol and access to a kitchen equipped with the following utensils – scales, cups, spoons, airtight glass jars (preserving jars are ideal), colander, strainer, filter paper (coffee-filter is excellent), funnel, empty bottles and corks or screw tops. Ideally, you need to seal the liqueur while it is maturing as alcohol vaporises readily and the liqueur gradually loses its zing unless you daub the cork with melted beeswax or paraffin wax.

If you can get hold of absolute alcohol (190° proof spirit i.e. about 95 percent alcohol and 5 percent water) *legally*, this is the best and cheapest (because it hasn't paid any duty to the government). However, as it is illegal for ordinary citizens to possess absolute alcohol, this ownership is usually confined to doctors, chemists, vets, laboratory workers and science teachers. The rest of us can use vodka which is perfectly satisfactory, as it is a neutral spirit and it can be used straight from the bottle. Absolute alcohol can be cut to 95° proof spirit with an equal quantity of pure water. At full strength it would be just a bit overpowering. I must stress that methylated spirit is definitely out – its taste is awful and it is poisonous – and although the home distillation of alcohol is very simple, the possession of a moonshine still inclines the police to turn quite nasty towards its owner.

Once you have your alcohol, the only other raw materials needed are fruit or herbs, and sugar. Use white sugar, as it is neutral in taste. Brown sugar or raw sugar imparts a molasses taste to the completed liqueur. Honey would be perfectly OK and different varieties would add an intriguing flavour to standard recipes. You steep the various ingredients in alcohol and water for a specified time, sometimes in the sun and, that completed, you filter the liqueur until clear and set it aside to mature, preferably in a dark, cool place. One year I made 17 different liqueurs, some of which I wouldn't bother with again,

not because they were failures, but they weren't to my taste. As they took varying times to mature I had a constant supply of accompaniments to my after-dinner coffee for a long time. Since senility has taken its toll I have scaled down both my manufacture and intake but I usually make enough to ensure that there is sufficient to have at least a couple of snorts a week. Some of the simplest to make are apple and citrus liqueurs and those made with herbs and spices. Some are very hard to filter so that they are clear. I made one from mangoes last year which was quite thick and syrupy. The same goes for strawberry but it is worth persevering with as the liqueur is delightful in taste and has the colour of crimson velvet. You can change the sugar content and cut down on the herbs or fruit if you wish. I made one liqueur from loquat seeds, which was good, but the taste was far too strong. Half the loquat seeds would have been enough. One last warning: freshly made liqueurs are raw, just like the absolute alcohol or vodka. You have to let them mature so that the taste will soften and the bouquet intensify.

HOME MADE LIQUEURS

Here are some of my favourite recipes – ones I've experimented with over the years until I'm happy with the result. Waiting for them to mature is the difficult part. Start with fairly small amounts of each – quality is more important than quantity.

Apple Ambrosia

equal quantities of apples (granny smiths are good) and sugar

for every 450 g (1 lb) apples:

peel of one lemon

8-10 rose petals (white ones are most aromatic)

180 ml (6 fl oz) 95° alcohol or vodka

Wash and dry apples, core and chop into convenient pieces but do not peel. Place apple pieces and all other ingredients in airtight jar, close jar and set in sun until sugar is dissolved. Strain liqueur into dark glass bottle and cork. Let liqueur mature for 2 months in cool dark place. The apple pieces can be eaten as a dessert. This makes about 600 ml (20 fl oz) of liqueur about 22° alcohol.

Liqueur Apples

With this recipe you can have the combination as dessert or drink the liqueur separately. Beware – it is stronger than the previous recipe.

5 medium apples

250 g (8 oz) sugar

400 ml (14 fl oz) 95° alcohol or vodka

6 cloves

12 mm (1/2 in) piece of cinnamon stick

2-3 leaves lemon verbena

Cut unpeeled apples into large pieces and remove seeds. Mix with all the sugar and 1.5 ml (4 fl oz) of alcohol/vodka in an airtight glass jar and place in the sun for one week. Then add the remaining alcohol and other ingredients. Shake lightly to mix and let mature in a cool dark place for seven months before serving. This recipe makes about 800 ml (28 fl oz) of 38° liqueur.

Banana Sublime

This one is very sweet and rather syrupy.

3 large or 5 medium bananas
 3 whole cloves
 12 mm (1/2 in) of cinnamon stick
 225 ml (8 fl oz) sweet red vermouth
 570 g (20 oz) sugar
 450 ml (16 fl oz) 95° alcohol/vodka

Peel bananas and slice thickly. Place slices in an airtight jar with the sugar and vermouth. After 10 days add the rest of the ingredients and let stand in a cool, dark place for 1 month. Strain liqueur through cheesecloth and let it mature for a further 2-3 months. This provides about 1020 ml (36 fl oz) of 42° liqueur which also makes a good sauce over icecream.

Spiced Caraway

2 tbsp caraway seeds
 4 whole cloves
 1 tsp anise
 1/2 tsp coriander seeds
 450 ml (16 fl oz) 95° alcohol/vodka
 510 g (18 oz) sugar
 400 ml (14 fl oz) water

Steep all ingredients except sugar and water in airtight glass jar for 2 weeks. Dissolve sugar in boiled water, cool and add syrup to jar. Let stand two more weeks. Strain through filter paper into dark glass bottle, seal and let mature 8 months. This makes about 1020 ml (36 fl oz) of 42° liqueur, similar in flavour to kummel or akvavit.

Classic Cherry

for every 450 g (1 lb) cherries
 4-5 whole cloves
 12 mm (1/2 in) piece cinnamon stick
 2-3 leaves peppermint
 120 g (4 oz) sugar
 350 ml (12 fl oz) 95° alcohol/vodka

Remove stems from cherries, wash thoroughly and dry. Place in clear jar with sugar and stand in sun for one day with top open. Add all other ingredients and close jar. Shake gently twice a day for 1 week and then let mature for 8 months. This makes about 625 ml (22 fl oz) of 44° liqueur – wonderful colour and flavour. The cherries themselves make a fine dessert too.

Just Juniper

100 juniper berries
 280 ml (10 fl oz) 95° alcohol/vodka
 350 g (12 oz) sugar
 350 ml (12 fl oz) water

Add berries to alcohol in airtight glass jar and leave for 4 weeks. Dissolve sugar in boiled water, let cool. Filter off the liquor from the berries add it to sugar syrup. Bottle and seal and mature for 8 months. This makes about 680 ml (24 fl oz) of about 40° liqueur.

Orange Velvet

450 ml (16 fl oz) fresh orange juice
 zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon, sliced
 4 whole cloves
 12 mm (1/2 in) piece of cinnamon stick
 1 small mandarin or tangelo, peeled and segmented
 120 g (4 oz) sugar
 350 ml (12 fl oz) 95° alcohol/vodka

Combine all ingredients in airtight jar, shake well and

macerate for 6 months, shaking occasionally. Strain and filter into a dark glass bottle and let mature for a further 5 months. This makes about 700 ml (24 fl oz) 40° alcohol.

Pineapple Plush

450 g (1 lb) pineapple, finally chopped
 225 g (8 oz) sugar
 12 mm (1/2 in) piece of vanilla bean
 350 ml (12 fl oz) 95° alcohol/vodka

Place all ingredients in airtight glass jar and shake twice a day for 1 week. Then strain liqueur through colander and filter paper into a dark glass bottle and let mature for 8 months. This makes about 625 ml (22 fl oz) of 40° liqueur.

Reference

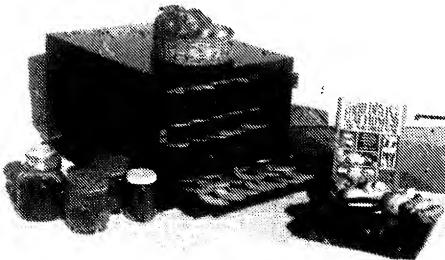
Liqueurs For All Seasons, Emilio Cocconi, translated and adapted by Frank and Patricia Kulla, Lyceum Books, Wilton, Connecticut, USA (no publication date).

CRYPTIC GRASSWORD

Continued from page 45.

D	A	M	N	E	D	+	A	S	S	U	R	E
I	+	E	+	K	+	+	+	H	+	N	+	N
V	E	N	U	E	S	+	C	U	C	K	O	O
E	+	A	+	S	H	O	O	T	+	I	+	U
R	I	C	E	+	O	+	N	+	S	N	U	G
S	+	E	X	P	R	E	S	S	E	D	+	H
+	+	+	I	+	T	+	U	+	N	+	+	+
F	+	A	L	C	H	E	M	I	S	T	+	B
L	A	N	E	+	A	+	I	+	E	R	G	O
Y	+	T	+	I	N	A	N	E	+	A	+	N
I	N	L	A	N	D	+	G	A	R	D	E	N
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G	E	R	M	A	N	+	S	E	C	R	E	T

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IF IT'S PEKINS YOU PREFER

by Warren Hicks, Albany, WA.

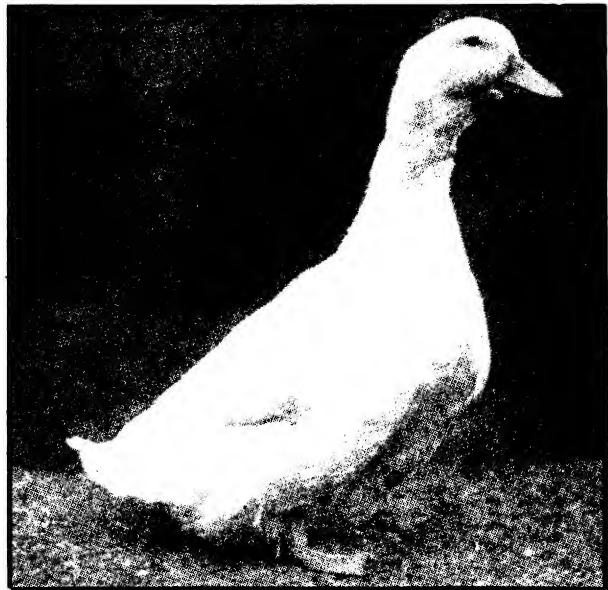
I very much enjoyed reading about the majestic Rouen duck in the last issue of *Grass Roots* and want to bring readers' attention to another table breed of merit, the Pekin. The Pekin duck is a good farmlet breed, happy to forage, a respectable layer, exceptionally fast maturing and sufficiently common for stock to be easy to procure. An additional bonus is that you are keeping the breed that inspired that lovable comic character, Donald Duck.

As the name suggests the Pekin originated in China and was introduced to both England and America during the 1870's. In the former it was used as an outcross to restore the inbred Aylesbury to its former position of premier table duck but in America it came into its own when its hardy nature and vigour rapidly won it favour with breeders and it became unequalled as a meat bird. Undoubtedly one aspect of appeal was the Pekin's yellow flesh and skin, characteristics popular with American consumers and developed in all their dual purpose or meat fowls as well (Rhode Island Reds, New Hampshires, Plymouth Rocks, Wyandottes and Cornish strains).

There are two types of Pekins available, a genetically improved commercial strain and the old fashioned show bird. The former have been developed from crosses between different families of Pekins and are ideal for table production. They combine fast feathering with a rapid growth rate and if properly fed and managed will reach at market age, around 8 weeks between 2.2 kg (5 lb)-2.4 kg (5¹/₄lb). They tend to be white feathered, smaller than their exhibition cousins but very vigorous, hardy and fertile. Exhibition Pekins on the other hand vary from cream-creamy white in colour and are a large bodied bird. Desirable weights for adults birds are drakes 4.10 kg (9 lb) and ducks 3.60 kg (8 lb). There are recognised characteristics that exhibition Pekins should display and the most thorough description of these is found in the *British Poultry Standards* by David Hawksworth and published by Butterworths.

Regardless of the type of Pekin you choose there are breed characteristics common to both. They are surprisingly good layers for a heavy breed with ducks from the commercial strains at the Department of Agriculture Cressy Poultry Centre (Tas) reportedly laying around 190 eggs a year. Laying generally commences at about 5¹/₂ months of age, depending upon strain and management, and for the main white shelled eggs are produced, there also being a small number of tinted eggs laid. Though the breed is classed as non sitters, poultry keepers usually find some ducks will in fact go broody but it is a trifle chancy whether they will sit firm or abandon the nest if disturbed or frightened. Pekins have a nervous disposition, surprising really for such a large bird, and this should be taken into account in breeding, housing and handling them. Growing ducklings will stampede if frightened and risk injury or suffocation from pile ups, while adult birds do best sited away from noisy dogs and kids. They can and will adjust to a busy farm yard but because of their size and slowness will be easy prey for dogs. Quiet and sensible handling together with a protected shed and paddock will enable this versatile and productive breed to maintain egg output or weight gain.

Physically the Pekin has an upright stance not unlike the Runner



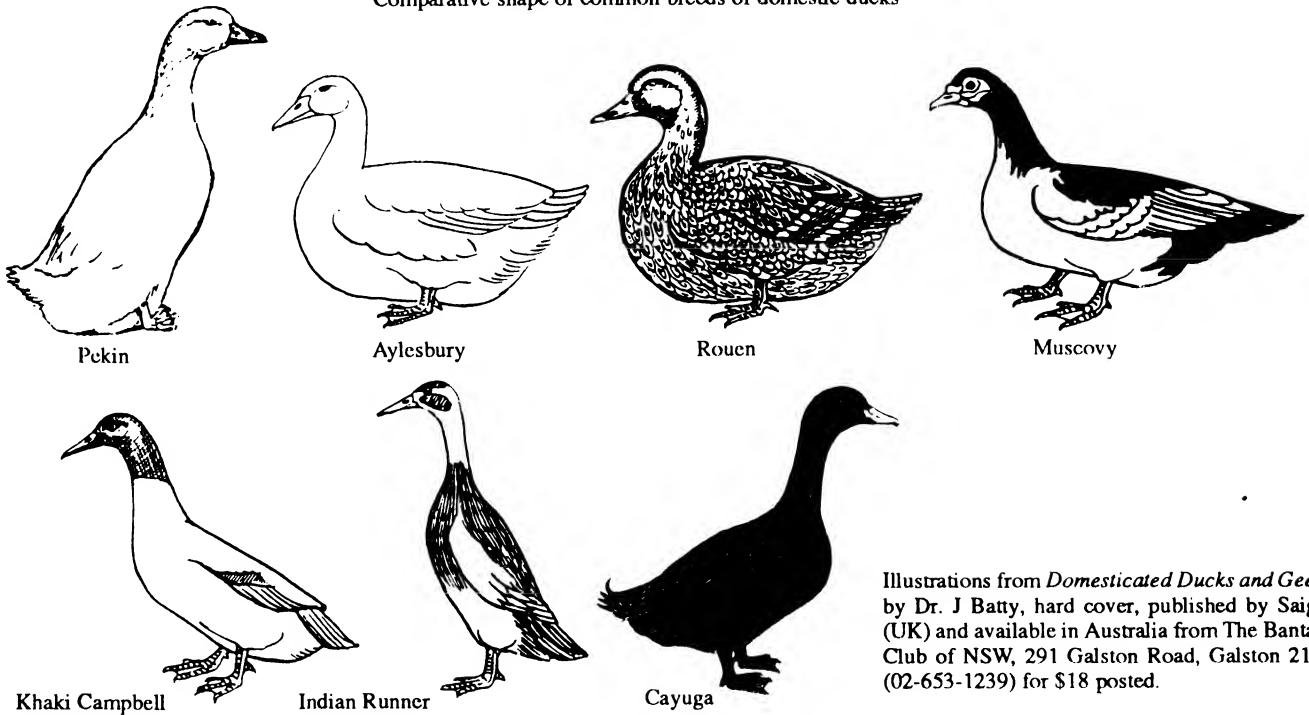
An exhibition Pekin showing the breed's distinctive stance.

duck, the back legs set well back and producing a waddle reminiscent of a penguin. The head is large, broad and carried high, cheeks appear puffy and the distinct grey-blue eyes are hidden under heavy overhanging eyebrows. The body is broad and well breasted and the general shape should 'resemble a small wide boat standing almost on its stern and the bow leaning slightly forward'. Feet and shanks are red-orange and the rather short, thickish bill a bright orange. Pekins differ markedly in their shape from the other two traditional table breeds, the Rouen and Aylesbury, partly because of the angle (40°) at which they carry their body and because of the absence of the exaggeratedly developed feet.

Despite being a big bird Pekins have always had a reputation for fecundity and it is only when one gets into the very heavy exhibition strains that breeding problems occur. Utility Pekins are vigorous and fertile and can be kept at a ratio of 1 drake to 5-6 ducks. With the heavier birds it is wisest to only run one or two ducks with the drake. Best results are gained from using agile young drakes, the additional weight they gain as they age making mating a gymnastic feat particularly if a pond is not available. Waterfowl in general prefer to mate in water but most have adapted successfully to its absence, Pekins however are a breed that do better with it. Many young drakes suffer infertility for no apparent reason and it is thought damage has occurred to the penis through enthusiastic mating on land. Breeders feel it can be avoided if a relatively deep pond is provided.

Ducks of this breed as already mentioned are not inclined to broodiness so it is worthwhile keeping a number of Muscovies for this purpose. We've always had a number of Pekins that have gone broody and raised their young successfully, the key perhaps being management. We keep a number of pens with a trio of birds in each and there has been plenty of room for a duck to sit without interference from pen mates. Eggs take 28 days to hatch, and set only the number of

Comparative shape of common breeds of domestic ducks



Illustrations from *Domesticated Ducks and Geese*
by Dr. J. Batt, hard cover, published by Saiga,
(UK) and available in Australia from The Bantam
Club of NSW, 291 Galston Road, Galston 2159
(02-653-1239) for \$18 posted.

eggs a duck will comfortably cover. If you overset there is a strong risk some if not all eggs will become chilled at some stage during brooding. Remove duck and ducklings after hatching and establish in a well protected shed or coop. Keep water containers shallow as ducklings can easily drown.

Pekins are my choice of table duck because of their early maturing and excellent growth rate, because of the even growth between the sexes and because their creamy plumage does not leave dark pin feathers after plucking. I've rejected the Muscovy because of the weight discrepancy between the sexes, poor laying ability, longer incubation period, repeated problems with aggressive drakes and their ability to fly the coop. Crossbreeding is an option and produces hybrid vigour. The Pekin/Aylesbury cross was popular in England but the latter are difficult to obtain as are White Campbells, which also produce a satisfactory cross. Muscovies can be used but don't forget progeny cannot be kept for replacement breeder stock because the offspring are sterile.

Finally a word on housing. Because of foxes' preference for fresh duck it is best to erect decent housing and pens. We have a complex with half a dozen sheds and yards, all concrete floored and wired over on top. Each has a baby's bath type of pond for mating and keeping feathers clean though we don't fill them if young ducklings are in the pen. Next door is the orchard and we use netting to make temporary runs to accommodate all the breeders. Young ducks are housed in a simple grower shed that opens onto a small paddock with tree coverage and a pond. At the start we had the ducks running around the farm but neighbours' dogs, foxes, hawks and our inability to control them meant losses and unsuccessful hatches. Now they are clean all year, are safe and can be left for weekend breaks.

If you enjoy duck and would like to produce your own table birds may I recommend the Pekin. There are usually producers

advertising in the poultry section of your state rural newspaper, or contact your Royal Agricultural Society for breeders if it's exhibition birds you like.



Two young Pekins pictured on the range. Note the rounded meaty breasts. Big birds like this need a high protein ration as wheat alone won't allow them to reach their potential.

Waterfowl enthusiasts may also like to know of the existence of the Pheasant and Waterfowl Society of Australia, which has active branches in each state. Membership is \$15 a single, \$20 a family per year and includes an informative monthly newsletter. Write to Membership Secretary Bill Connors, RMB 3410, Euroa 3666. Bill has an article in GR 41 p 35 on 'Protecting Poultry with Electric Fencing.'

CHEMICALS AND YOU

The increasing use of pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers is now known to result in the contamination of both soil and water. Wildlife has been destroyed by the application of chemicals and insect pests are proving increasingly resistant to these. The long-term effects of these chemicals on human health is not yet known. There are worrying indications, though, that they may be carcinogens and cause a host of birth defects in future generations. Herbicides, while destroying weeds, leave a residue on the earth's surface that is an ideal breeding ground for pests and diseases. To counter this threat, pesticides need to be added to the herbicides and an expensive and inflationary dose of chemical pollutants is being added to an already heavily polluted planet.

From *Battle for the Planet* – Andre Singer

PESTICIDES IN RURAL/URBAN COMMUNITIES

The Health Promotion Unit of Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Hospital, with the assistance of the NSW Department of Health, has devised a community awareness program designed to educate growers in the Sydney Hills District about the dangers of incorrect pesticide use and the correct safety procedures to adopt when dealing with these potentially lethal chemicals. The main thrust of the campaign is a video which can be used not only by growers in the Hills District but also by rural communities throughout Australia. The video, titled *You're the Boss*, outlines the ways pesticides can enter the body and how we can make a difference to our own health, the health of our families and our community by taking simple precautions when using pesticides. Reports, brochures and posters – in both English and Italian – are also part of this campaign, which was prompted by concern over levels of respiratory and other illnesses among market gardeners in the Hills District.

For further information contact: Patricia Krolik, Health Promotions Unit, Hillview, 1334 Pacific Hwy, Turramurra 2074. Ph: 02-449-9144.

HOW LONG DO PESTICIDES REMAIN IN SOIL?

Pesticide persistence depends on a number of factors, most of these influenced by the particular chemical structure of the pesticide. Some pesticides are much more soluble in water than others; highly soluble pesticides tend to be removed from the soil by runoff and/or leaching. And the speed of degradation by natural processes is highly dependent on pesticide chemistry.

Pesticide persistence is usually expressed in terms of 'half-life' (the typical length of time needed for one-half of the total amount applied to break down to nontoxic substances). While half-life in practice is influenced by local conditions such as soil type and climate, it is useful for describing the relative speeds at which various pesticides are broken down in the soil. In the list below, 'non-persistent' means that the typical half-life is 30 days or less, 'moderately persistent' means that the typical half-life is 30 to 100 days, and 'persistent' means that the typical half-life is 100 days or more. Trade names under which the chemicals are marketed appear in brackets.

Non-Persistent

Herbicides Alachlor (Lasso), Bifenox (Modown), Butylate (Sutan+, Genate Plus), Cyanazine (Bladex), Dicamba (Banvel), Dinoseb (Premerge), EPTC (Eptam, Eradicane, Genep), Metribuzin (Sencor, Lexone), Oryzalin (Surflan), Propachlor (Ramrod, Bexton), Tridiphane (Tandem), Vernolate (Vernam, Reward).

Insecticides, Fungicides, and Nematicides Aldicarb (Temik),

Captan, Dalapon, Diazinon (Spectracide), Malathion, Phorate (Thimate).

Moderately Persistent

Herbicides Acifluorfen (Flazer, Tackle), Atrazine (Atrex), Bentazon (Basagran), Chloramben (Amiben), Chlорpropham (Furloe), Glyphosate (Roundup), Linuron (Lorox, Linex), Metolachlor (Dual), Simazine (Princep, Aquazine), TCA, Terbacil (Sinbar), Trifluralin (Treflan).

Insecticides and Nematicides Carbaryl (Sevin), Carbofuran (Furadan), Chlorpyrifos (Lorsban), Endrin, Fonofos (Dyfonate), Parathion (Niram).

Persistent

Herbicides Cyanazine (Bladex), Paraquat (Gramoxone), Pichloram (Tordon).

Insecticides Chlordane, Dieldrin, Heptachlor, Lindane (Isotox, Silvano).

From 'Don't Let Pesticides Contaminate Groundwater', *Crops and Soils* 38(5), February 1986, 25-26, American Society of Agronomy. 677 S Segoe Rd, Madison WI 53711.

Reprinted from *Permaculture Nambour* June-Sept 1986, C/ 56 Isabella Ave, Nambour 4560.

COMMUNITY CONCERN OVER DIOXINS

Tampons and sanitary pads have been found to contain residual dioxins produced by the chlorine bleaching process. Dioxins can build up in the body over years. They can also enter the food chain via sewage disposal into the ocean or when waste from pulp mills is dumped into waterways. Scientific research has not been able to establish any safe level of exposure to dioxin. Possible effects of dioxin exposure include cancers, birth defects, suppression of the immune system, reproductive failures and aiding other carcinogens.

There are alternative methods to chlorine bleaching which can be aesthetically pleasing to women, as well as less harmful. European and British manufacturers have been compelled to make products which are not chlorine bleached. In Australia the same manufacturers have disputed the evidence which has convinced their overseas companies to discard traditional bleaching methods. Now Sancella, producer of Libra products, has announced a date for changeover to non-chlorine bleach. Other multi-nationals have given no such undertaking. The newly formed consumer group PADS (People Against Dioxins in Sanitary protection) is asking consumers to boycott all sanitary products containing dioxins.

For further information contact: PADS, C/- 18 Paling St, Lilyfield 2040.

Battle for the Planet by Andre Singer is published by Pan Books.

Ripsawing Timber

by Jack and Jacqueline O'Foltrades, Bonang, Vic.

When building the house on our bush block we were confronted with \$30 loadings on heavy cross-section timbers for our post and beam mudbrick house. We decided to try and chainsaw them in 230 x 100 mm (9 x 4 in) and 250 x 125 mm (10 x 5 in) sleepers – so what if they're rough? Stringybark is a fine timber and white stringy saws beautifully. The crosscut chain jumped and slewed a bit and double cut here and there but we did it, albeit the hard way! Then we discovered the ripchain. The dealer wisely advised us to buy a new bar with the chain, and with the Alaskan 111 attachment (more on that later) we haven't looked back.

The beauty of this system is that there is no need for heavy equipment. After having felled your tree (or if the winter storms did it for you) cut up the butt to the required lengths with your crosscut chain and bar. Switch to your ripping chain and its bar and, after having winched your log onto one or more trestles built up of 250-300 mm (10-12 in) logs and marked off the widths with chalkline, ruler and carpenters square, you'll do very well. To winch the log you can use a 'fence puller' or one of those 'one ton pullers' you see a lot of. We purchased 10 m (33 ft) of cheap chain which fits our fence strainer. Pull on the correct end of the chain and the log will roll! (see figure 1.)

The ripping chain has two drive links between each set of alternate chisels (figure 2). Note that the chisels are cut square across the top and if you use a 5.6 mm ($\frac{7}{32}$ in) for your crosscut then use a 4.8 mm ($\frac{3}{16}$ in) file for your ripping chain. The file for your ripchain should be 0.8 mm ($\frac{1}{32}$ in) smaller in diameter to give that 'hook' to make the saw dig in that much better. Check each chisel edge with a magnifying glass – it is easy to cut a hook and not cut a sharp edge, so touch and magnification are important. Depending on your timber you'll cut 2.8 m² (30 ft²) of blue gum and 5.6 m² (60 ft²) of white stringbark or messmate with each sharpening.

If your sharpening has been done well the chainsaw should pull itself through the log. If you have to push too hard your chisels are blunt and you are wearing out the groove in the bar. Suspended horizontally in the Alaskan Mill Frame, with the log slightly downhill, the saw 'gravitates' as it rips through the log. It is remarkably easy to hold in your hands, as I'll explain further in the next article. Our 7.3 m (24 ft), 250 x 50 mm (10 x 2 in) beams took about 5 minutes each.

Using the chainsaw horizontally requires a new bar every 230-460 m² (2500-5000 ft²), but with 50 mm (2 in) stock that represents 5000-10,000 'superfeet'. A superfoot is 12 x 12 x 1 in or 30.48 x 30.48 x 2.54 cm (ie 424 su ft to a cubic metre, at about \$400). So a new bar and chain cuts you between 1200-2400 su ft of 50 mm (2 in) stock, about \$1000-\$2000 worth, for about \$80-\$100 worth of chain and bar. You can make your own 50 x 100 mm (2 x 4 in) mill, as I'll show later.

When the bar and chain have worn wobbly (lateral movement) you can still use this bar and chain very successfully on 'freehand ripping', of course using your chalkline as a guide! Vertical freehand ripping is faster, but also a bit risky if you don't keep your feet out of the way. It is also, to my mind, much harder work!

The first time my Alaskan Mill Frame jammed I could not

work out that my bar was worn. We had cut and stacked some 5000 su ft, and pushed hard on the bar! The trouble was soon over when the dealer sent me a new bar and chain. In the meantime, however, I thought I was being punished for my sins, or stupid or just going 'batty'. A lot of mental anguish could have been avoided if I had realised that for horizontal (frame) sawing you need a new chain and bar and you'll cut 230-460 m² (2500-5000 ft²) of timber, provided you properly hook and sharpen the chisels on your ripchain.

When we had to carry the 8.5-9 m (28-30 ft) beams we'd chainsawed out of our bush, we extended the drawbar on our trailer from its original 1.2 m (4 ft) length to 3.6 m (12 ft), an alteration inspired by the 'boat trailer' idea. We use our provisionally extended trailer only on the farm, but if ever you have to carry long loads only a registered boat trailer would be permissible for road use. Our extended trailer makes backing so easy, however when carrying our long beams we never exceed third gear in low ratio.

Our 'jinker' was created by unbolting the ball coupling and bolting it onto a 100 x 100 mm x 3.6 m (4 x 4 in x 12 ft) pole with 100 mm (4 in) bolts. We used 12 mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in) diameter 'all thread' bent into a U-bolt to attach the old to the new drawbar, and for extra strength braced it with double strand 8 gauge fencing wire at all points, extending to the end of the new drawbar. We also twisted the wires together with a 25 mm (1 in) water pipe on either side of the drawbar (figure 3). We broke a few but happily replaced them. The third time we got it right and it lasted the year out. The wire serves as extra security.

In the next article I'll explain more fully how to set up the frame and chainsaw for hassle-free ripping of timber. I only wish we had had this information *before* we gained it (oft-times with tears and frustration) the hard way – by trial and error!

Fig. 1. Winching the log

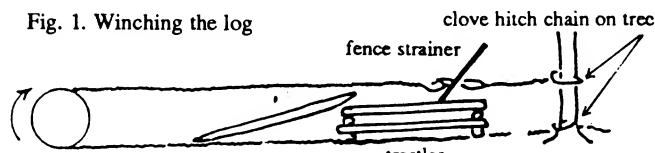


Fig. 2. The ripping chain

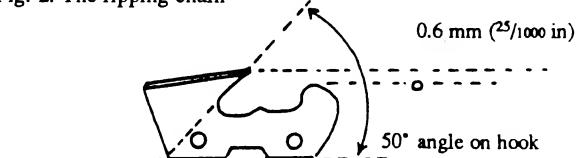
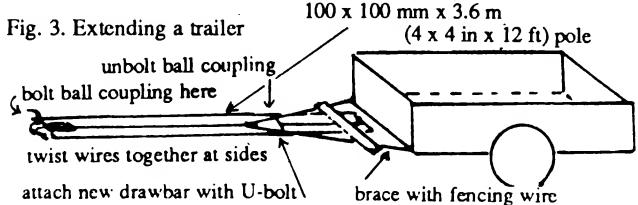


Fig. 3. Extending a trailer



Knapsack Sprays : Care and Use

by Greg Baker, Braidwood, NSW.

Knapsack sprays are an extremely useful and versatile tool for fire suppression. Though they are not usually considered the first line of fire defence, partly because of a modern reliance on higher levels of technology, they can be readily put to use at short notice and with minimal training. In addition, they are useful for controlled burns and mopping up after the main fire has passed. To do these vital jobs effectively knapsack sprays must be maintained and used properly.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance should be an ongoing process throughout the fire season, preceded by a thorough overhaul in spring. The overhaul should begin by complete dismantling of the pump and strainer assemblies.

To remove the strainer assembly you will need two spanners. A pair of 3 mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) shifting spanners will do. Reach inside the water reservoir with one spanner and grip the internal brass securing nut. Then unscrew the external strainer outlet socket using the other spanner on its inbuilt brass nut. Take care not to burr the nuts: brass is softer than the metal of the spanner. Remove the strainer assembly, noting the position of the nut and washers.

Now dismantle the strainer assembly sufficiently to inspect all parts. The brass elbow between the strainer assembly and the hose is designed to swivel and to snap into and out of the strainer assembly for field maintenance. Take care not to lose the three ball studs of the snap-in mechanism when you remove the stainless steel retaining spring.

Check the strainer for damage, make sure that the three rubber sealing washers are not perished or damaged, and clean all parts. An old toothbrush works well on the strainer without damaging it. Then liberally coat the three ball studs with petroleum jelly to lubricate them in use and to hold them in place while you replace the retaining spring. Reassemble the strainer and elbow, making sure to firmly tighten the securing nut, but leave the strainer screwed in finger tight. Then if the strainer becomes clogged in use, it will easily unscrew for field cleaning.

Next check that the hose is free of holes and there are no worn or burnt patches. If it needs replacement, first ease the crimped hose clamps from the hose ends with a screwdriver, then remove and replace the hose with another of the same length and internal diameter (13 mm/ $\frac{1}{2}$ in). The crimped connectors are no longer useable, so you will need to buy two 18 mm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in) hose clamps (about a dollar each) to secure the hose ends.

Now turn to the pump assembly. Check that the two ball valves operate freely and that the leather and rubber pump seals are serviceable. The ball valves are located one in the brass elbow between the hose and the pump, the other in the end of the pump plunger. Replace any damaged or worn parts. Rega, the makers of the knapsack spray, have available a pump repair kit (PT 99) which includes the leather and rubber washers and seals.

Thoroughly lubricate the pump shaft and around the rubber 'O' rings at the plunger end with petroleum jelly and reassemble the pump. Hand tighten the knurled brass pump securing ring

so that you can dismantle it if you need to when at a fire. Work the pump a few times to see that it is operating smoothly and easily.

The nozzle butterfly valve should be removed, cleaned, smeared with petroleum jelly and reassembled. Tighten the securing nut sufficiently to make the action of the valve firm but not difficult. Test a few times to seat the valve and to check that the securing nut is correctly adjusted.

Then clean the water reservoir. Finally check that the filler cap sealing ring is serviceable and securely glued in place and that the shoulder straps and fittings are capable of serving another season's use. Replace all suspect pieces so that there is no risk of being frustrated by an unusable knapsack when that fire comes through.

PRE-SEASON CHECK

Before the fire season is under way or before the time for controlled burns, take the knapsack out of storage and do a complete maintenance check on it. Then fill it with water and take it out and hose the garden or the kids. Run through several reservoirs full to get the feel of the knapsack on your back and to refresh your memory of how to operate the butterfly valve to produce varying jets of water.

If it is your first season with the knapsack, go to a bushwalking gear supply shop and buy two large rucksack shoulder pads. Throw away the thin plastic shoulder strap supports supplied with the knapsack and fit the shoulder pads in their place. Then adjust the terylene straps so that the knapsack is both easy to slip on and a good firm fit on your back.

USING THE KNAPSACK SPRAY

Because it is rigid, the easiest way to slip a knapsack spray on ready for use is to have it at the height of your back first. Use the tray of a truck, a stump or a fence post or ask a companion to hold the knapsack up for you. Then simply back up to the knapsack, slip on the shoulder straps and ensure they are not twisted, then take the weight of the knapsack and water.

In addition, unless you are double jointed or have arms long enough to reach the ground, it is far easier to unsnap the pump and hose from the recesses in the knapsack body before you have it on your back. Make sure to rotate the brass fitting at the strainer and not to twist the hose. This latter will damage the hose and limit maximum water output.

If you aren't 2 m ($6\frac{1}{2}$ ft) tall and 150 kg (330 lb) of bone and muscle, don't completely fill the reservoir. You are more use refreshed with a light load of water than exhausted with a heavy one. Overfilling too can mean a wetting if you bend over. Still, a wetting can be refreshing if you are fighting a fire.

Hold the pump loosely in your right hand when not operating it. If you allow the pump to hang free it will put unnecessary strain on the hose adjacent to the strainer, may drag the jet in the dirt and the butterfly valve may rotate and the water come on, draining the reservoir to the ground. If you want to rest your hands and forearms, fashion a wire hook, attach it to your trousers belt and rest the pump in that.

The adjustment of the spray is straightforward. Try it a few times to see how the butterfly valve setting affects the water jet



Take care of your knapsack spray – it could save your life!

pumped out. There are two jets: one a long thin jet, the other a broader jet. The jet stop screw on the nozzle can be adjusted to vary the shape of the long thin jet to a finer, closer spray which is more economical with water. Notice that varying the position of the screw alters the amount of the outlet hole uncovered and hence the shape of the jet. Experiment to find the best setting for your needs.

Notice also that there are two 'off' positions to the butterfly valve, both with the valve handle at right angles to the pump. Using either is satisfactory but try to get into the habit of always turning the valve off to the same position. This means you will not have to think and fumble around to get the required jet if a sudden flare-up occurs. The best 'off' position to use is probably the one against the stop when you turn the butterfly valve fully clockwise. The stop is a clear signal that the valve is really off.

Water supplies in the knapsack are obviously limited, so use the water as sparingly as possible. Full, the knapsack holds 16 lit (3½ gal) and at a maximum pumping rate of nearly 3 lit (2/3 gal) per minute, you can easily empty the knapsack in five or six minutes. To conserve water, remember to aim the jet of water at the base of the fire and try to aim the jet along rather than across the fire front so that all the water has an effect.

When the knapsack is empty, it is easier to have it filled on your back than remove it and have to struggle it on again. Of course, you run the risk of a soaking from a clumsy or playful helper, but then a little cooling in fire weather sometimes works wonders for morale.

CARE IN USE

- Don't place the spray on rough ground or on embers.
- Don't place the spray among flammable unburnt material if there is even the remotest possibility that the fire will engulf it there.

- Don't use the knapsack spray as a seat.
- Don't throw knapsacks into or out of vehicles and do secure them firmly in a moving vehicle.
- Always secure the hose and pump in the slots in the reservoir when not in use.

And because you may need the water for drinking, for cooling burns or even hosing the kids, never put liquids other than water in the knapsack spray. In particular, never use the knapsack spray for agricultural chemicals. Not only can they be dangerous if you drink their residues or come in contact with them, they can also damage the knapsack unit itself.

When not in use, cover your knapsack spray to protect it from sunlight. The ultraviolet in sunlight will eventually destroy the plastic of the knapsack but this can be postponed by proper covering. Preferably put the knapsack in a dark place, but at least keep it from direct sunlight. Outside the fire danger period consider it essential to keep the spray in darkness.

Following these few ideas will lead to a longer life for your knapsack spray and trouble free use when a wildfire threatens or a controlled burn looks like accelerating through the neighbour's orchard.

Everyone's Guide to Toxics in the Home

When cleaning your home keep in mind that you don't have to replace grease and dirt with dozens of chemicals dangerous to your family and to the overall environment. Most of your household cleaning needs can be met with six simple ingredients: vinegar, soap, baking soda, washing soda, borax (used very sparingly, do not wash it down the drain) and ammonia. Various combinations of these simple substances can accomplish most household cleaning jobs cheaply and safely. Use caution with all cleaners. Even some non-toxic cleaners are unsafe for consumption.

CLEANING ITEMS

Avoid detergents and bleaches, which are highly polluting to waterways and aquatic life. Soap is preferable. Here are some cheap and simple alternatives.

- Dishes – use soap flakes, with a dash of vinegar for tough grease, or a few drops of tea tree oil.
- Laundry – 1/3 cup soda (sodium carbonate) with 1-1½ cups soap per wash load.
- All purpose cleaner – 4 lit (1 gal) hot water, 1/4 cup sudsy ammonia, 1/4 cup vinegar, 1 tbsp baking soda.
- Simple alternatives are given in our other leaflet *Toxics in the Home* for cleaning mirrors, glass, ovens, drains, toilet, carpet, tiles, for polishing metals and furniture, and for repelling household and garden pests.

These excerpts are taken from material compiled by Greenpeace, Washington DC, USA, and reprinted from *Nimbin News*. For more information send \$1 to *Nimbin News*, Rainbow Information Centre, Cullen Street, Nimbin 2484, and we'll forward it to you.

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

For display advertising in *Grass Roots* call 057-947-256. Classified advertising should be prepaid – please send coupon from Classified section to PO Box 242, Euroa 3666.

A LITTLE WATER GOES A LONG WAY

It's such a precious commodity in many parts of this country that a little water *has* to go a long way, maybe even recycled two-three times. Those living in the drier regions soon learn water sense but how many urban dwellers are actually aware of the water they use until restrictions or drought conditions enforce awareness? GR 62 featured articles on readers' experiences living with little water and below we have more ideas for stretching a little a long way.

WHEN TO WATER

When watering the vegetable plot it is worth ensuring that one gets maximum benefit from the water applied. When using can or hand held hose, water individual plants thoroughly, rather than watering the whole area. For plants which need regular water, sink a plant pot down to soil level (say 12 cm/5 in) next to these plants and water into this. This takes water straight down into the soil where it is needed and stops soil being washed away from around the plant.

If using a sprinkler, a good soak once in a while is far more beneficial than a little and often. Check the soil after you have watered to see how deeply the water has penetrated – you may be surprised at the amount needed to make any real impression on a dry soil. Do not overwater with a sprinkler, though, as the action of water droplets can damage the surface structure unless it is rich in organic matter. Trickle irrigation, which comes in various forms of leaking hose pipe, is much kinder to the soil structure and is much less wasteful.

Seedlings and young transplants should never go short of water but once established their needs can vary considerably:

- Root crops – general watering. Only water when soil is drying out. Too much water will encourage leaf growth at the expense of roots. Water shortage: roots will survive better than most crops in drought. Try not to let soil dry out completely, or roots will tend to split when water is finally applied.
- Onions – too much water delays maturity and reduces keeping quality. Only water in very dry conditions while plants are establishing.
- Peas and beans – in early stages don't water unless soil is very dry as this encourages lush growth and delays cropping. Watering when plants begin to flower and pods are swelling will increase the crop.
- Tomatoes – once established do not water until flowering starts. Less watering will reduce number and size of fruit but

these should be tastier. Try not to allow to dry out completely, once fruit has set.

- Marrows, etc – unlike other fruiting crops, watering the growing plants encourages rather than reduces the crop. For maximum cropping keep moist from start to finish, increasing water as cropping starts. Try not to overhead water if subject to mildew.
- Cauliflower – lack of water in early stages can cause small, premature curds.
- Cabbage – if soil is dry, a watering of 20 l/m² (4 gals/yd²) 2 weeks before harvesting will give best value. Don't overhead water or heads will split.
- Chinese cabbage – needs a large and regular supply of water. Not advisable in dry areas.
- Celery, celeriac, Florence fennel – a good supply regularly, otherwise they will be tough or bolt prematurely.
- Lettuce – water well, especially 7-10 days before harvest.
- Spinach – will rapidly run to seed in dry conditions. Silverbeet is more tolerant of dry conditions and NZ spinach quite resistant to drought.
- Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, kale – once established if widely spaced these crops should survive without watering.
- Strawberries – keep picked, mulched and watered. Mark good producers for new plants for next season and remove plants with mildew or rust.
- Fruit trees (flowering) – need heavy watering once a week.
- Citrus – need heavy watering once a week.
- Tomatoes, eggplants and capsicum, sweet potato and climbing beans – will hold their blossoms and keep producing if soil is cool.

Information from Henry Doubleday Research Association.

Reprinted from the *Canberra Organic Growers Society Newsletter* November 1989, 32 Ardlethan St, Fisher 2611.

WATER MANAGEMENT

by Peter Mason, WA.

As an indication of the problem of domestic over-consumption of water, an average Perth household consumes about 350 kL (77,000 gal) of water annually. The breakdown of its use: garden 40%, flush toilet 7%, shower or bath 21%, laundry 23%, drink/cook 9%.

WATER CONSERVATION HINTS

- Do without a dishwasher (or use only when full).
- Choose a washing machine for minimum water use.
- Install 'Flickmaster' taps (these are fully on after a quarter turn).
- Install a shower head which reduces water use.

- Install a dual flush cistern in the toilet.
- Locate your hot water system close to the point of use, or have special onsite heating systems as used in camping.
- Install a rainwater tank for all uses other than drinking (in metropolitan areas). Such a tank would collect 160 kL (35,000 gal) of water at Perth's rainfall rate.
- Pipe your grey water to the garden. (Grey water is what flows out of the bathroom, laundry or kitchen sink after use.) The 120 kL (26,400 gal) gained this way would be sufficient to keep the garden watered. A drainage system which filters grey water through a grease trap or sand filter would be desirable. Another

way is to direct the water into subsoil drainage like a leach drain from a septic tank, or use evapotranspiration techniques – lay drainage pipes on black plastic, cover with mounds of soil and plant on top.

- Find other ways of dealing with human waste! The figures are: annually, 38,000 l (8400 gal) of water per person are used to flush away 500 l (110 gal) of solid. A waterless loo would allow the use of faeces as a fertiliser. If dried or composted and allowed to reach sufficiently high temperatures for only four hours, pathogens are destroyed. To be safe the compost should be kept for six months and covered with soil when used. As a point of comparison, the pathogens in faeces transported in water (as in our sewage system) live for 6 months. The 380 l (84 gal) of urine produced per person per year could be used to fertilise fruit trees. Simply collect, add lime, stand for a day

and dilute with water. Alternatively, pee in a container of sawdust and use this on the trees – best not to use on vegetables in case of pathogens. Experiment with designs for a do-it-yourself composting loo and when you've produced one, let us know!

Further references

- Goodbye to the Flush Toilet*, Carol Stoner (ed).
The Swan Coastal Plain in Crisis, Dept of Agriculture, 1987.
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Principles of Water Quality Control, T H Y Tebbutt.
Small Scale Irrigation, Peter Stern.
Water Treatment and Sanitation: Simple Methods for Rural Areas, H T Mann & D Williamson.
- Reprinted from the November 1989 newsletter of the Permaculture Association of Wa Inc, PO Box 430, Subiaco 6088.

DISTRIBUTING GREY WATER

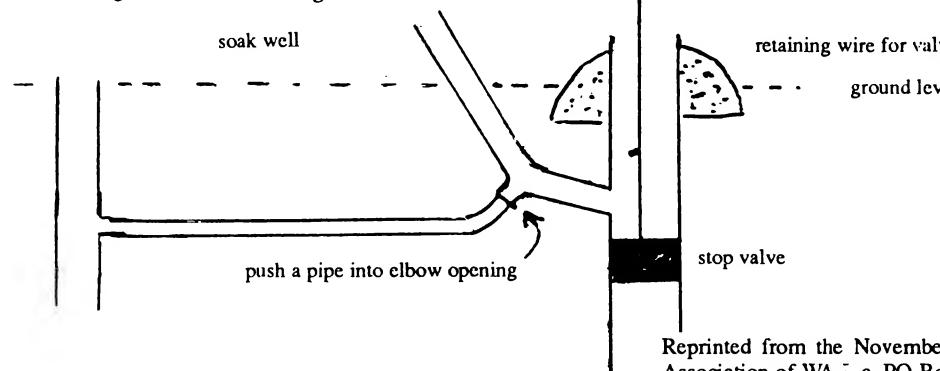
by Bob Hammond, WA.

The best pipes for distributing grey water are polythene (black and flexible) and PVC (stormwater pipe). Both come in various sizes and the smallest useful size is about 30 mm (1 in). In some cases the distributor can be attached directly to the drain plug on the 'S' bend sludge trap but it is usually not as simple as that.

Diagram 1 shows how I drain my shower water. Drilling a hole through concrete is difficult. I used a hammer and tap. An impact drill would be better and a jackhammer best.

Diagram 2 shows how I drain my sink and washtub water. The stop valve is made from a tuna tin or stubby holder. Wood will swell and jam. Making a watertight valve is difficult but a rubber solution helps.

Diagram 2. Drainage from sink and trough



Reprinted from the November 1989 newsletter of the Permaculture Association of WA Inc, PO Box 430, Subiaco 6088.

PENPALS

Hi! My name is Kelly Bekis and I am 10 years old. I would like a girl penpal aged 9-11. My interests include camping, painting, bushwalking, swimming, bike riding, music and cricket.

Lot 201, Taylors Arm Road, MACKSVILLE 2447.

Hi! I am boy of 9. I am interested in wood-working, many sports and drawing. I would like a male or female penpal from anywhere. Greetings from Rainbow Williams.

PO Box 581, MURWILLUMBAH 2484.

I would like penpals around Australia, preferably female. I am a 36 year old, married woman with 3 daughters. My interests include sewing, knitting and many other crafts, reading, netball and a love of the bush.

Sharon Wright, 83 Miranda Rd, MIRANDA 2228.

Hi! My name is Helen Catherine Ford. I am 43 years old and interested in music, gardening, walking and holidays.

PO Box 63, KATOOMBA 2780.

Penpal for female 21, into outdoors, snow-skiing, bushwalking, horses, books, overseas travel, especially Sweden and Swedish language. Correspond with anybody who enjoys life.

Ruth G, Westwood, via HAGLEY 7292.

Hi there! My name is Eileen Stevens. I am 33 years, married with three children 2, 4 and 5 years. I enjoy caring for my family breeding Anglo-nubian goats, caring for animals, gardening, knitting and reading. I would love to hear from people in Australia and overseas.

RMB H443, BALLARAT 3352.

Down home on the farm...

by Megg Miller



A friend sent me a wonderful cartoon a few years back, one of those timeless ones that you look at and think 'Ah, yes...'. It featured a woman in her dressing gown facing a precariously packed sink of dirty dishes first thing in the morning. Her eyes were puffy, her face a tired mask and she was muttering without conviction, 'You don't frighten me plates, you don't frighten me cups, you don't...'. I kept the picture because it captured so succinctly that overwhelming feeling everyone at some stage encounters when they are out of synch with the pace of life.

I've been feeling like that woman these last few weeks, the result no doubt of spending too much time on the poultry and too many late nights at the office. I struggle out in a daze each morning to tackle the first task, checking the incubator, a job reminiscent of opening Pandora's box. On good, gentle mornings I'm greeted by a handful of pipped eggs or maybe a chick or two, all dried out and chirpy. On busy mornings it's hordes of chicks and shells squirming everywhere and just occasionally there are bad days and the ghastly stench of a rotten egg leaps out when I open the door and I'm forced to spend a torturous hour or two washing away the mess. They're the mornings I can be heard murmuring '*You don't scare me incubator*'. It's late for large scale hatching I know but as David mentioned last issue my normally trusty machine suffered a series of breakdowns and so I'm still busy setting and hatching stock for replacement or orders.

The brooder shed is groaning, such are the numbers in it, and I'm having to be ingenious in working out ways to fit in all the chicks. I daren't bring any over to the house as David and Suni have already tolerated the companionship of a chicken and gosling, any more would push my luck too far. So there are chicks in large boxes and in galvanised iron surrounds and then boxes within these surrounds and I'm threatening boxes on boxes on boxes next. The risk of disease is exacerbated by overcrowding so I'm heavy handed with the garlic and particularly careful with keeping water clean and eliminating possible wet spots. The brooder shed is under the tree that split and fell upon the office so its inhabitants are lucky they reside under the enduring half of it. When the State Emergency Service were out removing the fallen tree a couple of workers peeped into the shed and noticed all the chicks were prostrate. 'Eh, you've got a problem here you'd better look at', one said and took a lot of convincing that the crowded masses of bodies were just asleep. With the temperature over the 43°C mark they were only too happy to doze. My tree removing adviser remained sceptical and the chicks lethargic but a few hours later when the cool change arrived the action in the shed equalled that of any playground – but of course there was no-one there to see it.

Some weeks back I did a terrible thing and one David won't let me forget. I ran over a rooster with the wheelbarrow. So what, you ask, surely he got up and ran away? This was a wheelbarrow weighted down with two full bucketloads of wet mash, and to get him out from under the barrow I had to run



back over him a second time. He was a heavy old Indian Game of retirement years and the shock and weight brought on a heart attack. I rushed him inside and administered Rescue Remedy and then panicked and plied him with brandy. He's still with us though his comb colour tells of cardiac problems and his gait is a trifle wobbly. I haven't the heart to do him in and hoped the hot weather would take its toll but no, life doesn't work that way, does it?

At about the same time I was faced with a dilemma so many of us avoid – personally putting down something that is sick or injured. Fortunately it was only a chook – I'm not up to dispatching a sheep or cow yet – which had developed a prolapse and then became flyblown. I dithered for hours hoping for divine intervention or just the human kind, but no, nobody turned up to save me. I performed the job with dignity for both of us and understood more fully some of the stories concerning killing we've had in GR. Several have been written in a semi-humorous fashion and elicited angry responses for their supposed lack of compassion. Unfortunately killing is not a skill one can practise regularly, like using an axe, it's something you do occasionally and do the best you can. And when you look at your fumbling efforts and your sentimental responses there are generally some very funny aspects. It's not amusement at the animal's predicament but at our practical ineptness and emotional fragility. I know I've been a wimp for years by passing the job on to someone else and I'm still a wimp but I've been able to mercy kill since. I've always believed suffering to be a worse fate than death and adhere to this more strongly now.

The last few weeks haven't all been gloomy. At Christmas we caught up with most of our immediate family and then spent a blissful week at home lazing or working at a civilised pace. And of course being school holidays we have Suni home. After months of subdued Bach and Mozart the house is suddenly vibrating to U2 and goodness knows who else. The sink has become chronically congested with dirty dishes and I haven't even glimpsed the bottom of the ironing basket. Worse, David's maple syrup and my chocolate just disappear, or did until I started hiding them in the vegie tender. Hopefully they're safe there. This offspring has cajoled me back to cooking dinner and shamed me into nightly exercises. 'You don't want to let yourself go...'. Don't I? It's exciting and lively, the atmosphere almost bouncing with adolescent energy and whilst we'll have our differences – and there are plenty of those – we seem to have acquired grace and a sense of understanding of the other's point of view.

I'll be sorry when the hols end and it's back to boarding school for Year 10, and I know David will be too. The house will feel old again, and subdued, and I'll miss arguing for my socks and undies, and all that chocolate I'll have to myself – why, I *will* need those darned exercises if I'm going to borrow all her clothes next time.

Recent Releases

On this page we present information about newly published books that we feel will interest readers, with details of prices and publishers. We no longer distribute books for other publishers so if you're interested in buying any of the books described here, please order them through your nearest bookstore.

HOME ECOLOGY – MAKING YOUR HOME A BETTER PLACE – Karen Christensen.

The word 'ecology' literally means the study of the home. It comes from the Greek 'oikos'. *Home Ecology* looks at the home as one kind of ecological system which is part of the larger ecosystem outside. It shows how you personally can improve your own environment and compensate for the stresses of modern urban and suburban life. Karen Christensen discusses ecological issues such as conservation, pollution and recycling in terms of simple, easily adaptable measures which can make positive and realistic adjustments to your standard of life. There are many practical suggestions covering all areas of domestic, social and working life, from the importance of utilising natural sunlight, to growing organic tomatoes in a window box, or substituting natural biodegradable cleaners for bleach. You may think that your single contribution can't possibly make any difference to the overwhelming ecological problems the world is facing, but the 'battle for the planet' is one we can all fight and thousands of tiny changes can add up to a significant change for the planet. This book is about awareness of all the changes you can make as an individual to help stop ecological destruction and at the same time improve the quality of your life. Although it is printed in England its message is universal and you will have no trouble adapting it to your area.

P/b, 366 pp, UK, Arlington Books. Distributed by Houghton Mifflin Pty Ltd. RRP \$14.95.

MY SMALL COUNTRY LIVING – Jeanine McMullen.

The author is an expatriate Australian, now living on 13 acres on the side of a Welsh mountain. In England she has a popular radio program of the same name, 'for and about people with real mud on their wellies'. The book takes us back to the beginning and her impulsive decision to buy her 'paradise', when the radio program was just an idea that nobody else was interested in. She accumulates animals in a haphazard 'innocence is bliss' manner, and each animal has its own distinctive character. We meet Doli the neurotic cart-horse, Whacky the rebellious goat, Blossom and Magnolia the polka-dotted human pigs and many more. The animals of course are the stars of the book, but the human characters are portrayed with such sensitivity and humour you will soon feel that they are your friends as well. The author learns about animal husbandry the hard way, as all newcomers to the land do. As you share her struggles, setbacks, panics and occasional despairs, you will find yourself nodding in understanding or crying in sympathy. As well, you will share the humour and enthusiasm that keep her going, and the triumph when the radio program she has planned for so long is finally accepted. Australian readers will be fascinated by the differences in landscape, climate and farming traditions, but will also find much that is common to people on the land everywhere. The sequel *Wind in the Ash Tree* tells the ongoing story of all the familiar characters, as well as introducing many new ones as the author travels around the country taping segments for her program.

P/b, 219 pp, UK, Allen & Unwin. RRP \$10.95. *Wind in the Ash Tree* RRP \$12.95.

FIBRE BASKETRY: HOMEGROWN AND HANDMADE – The Fibre Basket Weavers of SA Inc. (Ed. Helen Richardson).

The craft of basketry is almost as old as the human race and is becoming increasingly popular today for its creative as well as practical use of many beautiful natural plant fibres. This book is the first to look at this international craft from an Australian perspective. It represents the accumulated teaching and learning experience of a group of basketweavers living in South Australia. Clear and comprehensive descriptions of basic techniques will be of value to novice basket makers, while more experienced devotees of the craft will find stimulation and many new ideas. Instructions are given on choosing

and preparing suitable fibres to make a variety of different articles. The book is generously illustrated with line drawings and photographs, many in colour, to inspire your creativity.

H/b, 136 pp, Aust, Kangaroo Press. RRP \$29.95.

MAKING GOOD WINE: A MANUAL OF WINEMAKING PRACTICE FOR AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND – Bryce Rankine.

This is a technical book for Australia and New Zealand winemakers covering all aspects of winemaking. It is intended for professional as well as amateur winemakers, students and others who want to know more about wine. The author is highly qualified and experienced in his field. He provides detailed advice on how to design and equip a winery as well as descriptions of the various types of wines and how they should be produced, stabilised and cared for. Among the many other topics covered are: background on the wine industry, grape development and composition, all stages of the winemaking process through to packaging and marketing the end product. There is also a most useful chapter on the legal aspects of winemaking which will be of benefit to anyone either in or interested in the wine industry.

P/b, 374 pp, Aust, MacMillan. RRP \$19.99.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW? A Practical Guide for Australian Gardeners – Rosa Nirani.

The author is an architect, landscape designer and teacher. She has been awarded two national design awards for her work, has lectured at the Council of Adult Education and Burnley Agricultural and Horticultural College, and has been involved in community education programmes. In her latest book she answers the questions most often raised by people wanting to plan, renovate or preserve a garden. Any novice gardeners faced with a bare block of land will find her advice invaluable. More experienced gardeners will also find much useful information. As well as all the basic topics the author deals with such specialised areas as grafting, topiary, sprinkler systems and orchids. The format of the book is very clear, making instructions easy to understand and follow. The text is adequately illustrated with simple line drawings, although colour photographs would make the book much more enticing and better value for the price.

P/b, 244 pp, Aust, Viking O'Neil, Penguin. RRP \$19.99.

HOW TO BUILD A PORTABLE LIGHTWEIGHT STOVE . WITH BARBECUE PLATE – Jim Allowyn.

With this instruction manual the average handyperson should be able to construct the stove from scrap materials for \$5-10. It is light and easily portable, a versatile and efficient wood-burning stove and barbecue. Directions are straightforward and clearly illustrated and the book comes complete with damper recipes.

P/b, 24 pp, Aust, Trendline Publishing, GPO Box 1889, SYDNEY 2000. RRP \$9.95, damaged copies \$6.00.

AROMATHERAPY: AN A-Z – Patricia Davis.

Aromatherapy is the art – and science – of using essential plant oils in treatments. It has its roots in the most ancient healing practices of mankind. The fascinating introduction gives a brief history of medicinal plant use from primitive man to the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Chinese through the Middle Ages and the Tudor era to more modern times. It is a holistic therapy which can be used to complement many other forms of treatment, both orthodox and unorthodox. The body of the book consists of alphabetical entries covering such areas as symptoms, treatments, plants and definitions. It is written in layperson's terms with a minimum of jargon and quite apart from the dozens of practical applications, is absorbing reading.

P/b, 382 pp, UK, CW Daniel. Distributed by Lothian Books. RRP \$16.95.

ROUND THE MARKET PLACE

We hope you enjoy this feature introducing new products relevant to readers' lifestyles and interests.

BREAKTHROUGH IN BORE PUMPS

In response to the need for pumping equipment which is able to withstand the ravages of highly damaging bore water Davey Products Pty Ltd have employed new technology in pump construction. The Davey 'D' series deep well pumps have an internal lining which is unaffected by the electrolysis and mineral corrosion common with bore water. The pump body also has exceptional strength and a very smooth internal surface, reducing friction and lowering running costs. Consequently this range of pumps has gained a wide acceptance in the poor quality water areas of Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia which have been notorious for destroying stainless steel and other types of metal pumps in a short time. Each of the Davey deep well models is equipped with an automatic control valve which maintains optimum pressure to ensure maximum performance from the choice of eleven deep well injectors, for suction depths up to 40 m (130 ft). For the full story contact:

Your nearest Davey pump centre or Davey Products P/L, 2-22 Hargreaves St, HUNTINGDALE 3166. Ph: 03-544-6666.

INNOVATIVE SHEEP AND GOAT HANDLER

An innovative sheep and goat handler that can be operated by one person was the 1989 BHP Australian Steel Awards Primary Industry winner. The 'Green Machine' is designed to restrain animals without hurting or upsetting them. The livestock are directed up a ramp, around a blind corner then onto a conveyor section. The conveyor section consists of slats of 40 x 3 mm (1½ x ⅛ in) steel strap which are welded to every link of two parallel endless chains, providing the relatively light-weight machine, made of mild steel, with a strong conveyor system generating little friction. The speed of the conveyor and working height are controlled by the operator. The newly designed 'Green Machine' also allows the operator to easily invert the sheep and carry out foot work, crutching etc. It is simple to set up and easily transported. No need now to put off awkward sheep handling jobs.

Thomas J Dwyer, Dwyers Steel Fabrications Pty Ltd, 21 Albert St, PARKES 2780. Ph: 068-621-955. Fax: 068-623-392.



BIO-DEGRADABLE FLOWER POTS

The new Bio-Pots are made in Australia using 20 percent recycled newspaper and 80 percent cardboard, instead of being manufactured of compressed peat. The cardboard contains long fibres giving the pot its strength and durability. For the nurseryman, home gardener and farmer, Bio-Pots are an environmental and economic revolution. Because the pots will break down to organic compost planting out is quicker and easier. Simply place the whole pot containing the plant into the soil. The pot needs to be covered completely and will decompose within three months. The roots can easily penetrate the pot walls, thus avoiding that circling of roots around the inside of the pot. The roots are ready to go deep into the soil as soon as it's planted. The product is available in a large range of sizes.

International Reforestation Supplies, PO Box 67, BRUTHEN, 3885.

UNIQUE BODY PROTECTION

Le Crystal Naturel is a newcomer to the Australian deodorant marketplace. It is an environmentally safe product which offers a whole new concept in protection against body odour. It comes in the form of potash crystal, which preserves the normal body oils in your skin. Made of pure mineral salts in crystalline form, Le Crystal Naturel is non-allergenic, never sticky and will not sting, irritate or stain clothes. It is 100 percent biodegradable and simple to use. Just moisten the Crystal Naturel with water and gently rub onto the skin. A tiny amount of undetectable natural mineral salt is left on the skin. This prevents the bacteria which cause body odour from multiplying. Each crystal will last for two years or more with personal use.

Available from selected health food shops, beauticians and chemists.

MULTI-PURPOSE CONSUMER BATTERY

BP Solar has launched a multi-purpose consumer 12 volt battery which offers up to four times the life of a car battery in deep cycling solar, hybrid and auxiliary power systems. The 130 ampere/hour Powerbloc L130 is a compact battery with a rugged polypropylene case. Potential uses for the new battery include rural and caravan lighting, television/video and household appliances (via a DC/AC inverter), marine auxiliary power, golf carts, motorised wheelchairs and small forklift trucks. The L130's heavy duty internal components are equally suited to deep cycling (deep discharge and recharge) or continuous low current (shallow discharge and recharge) power systems. It has an integral handle for ease of transport and installation, an easy-to-fill electrolyte tray with spill-resistant vent cover for rapid topping up, and an expected maintenance interval of three to six months, to check the terminals for corrosion and to top up with distilled water. The battery is 320 mm long by 174 mm wide by 296 mm high (12½ x 7 x 11½ in) and weighs 33 kg (73 lb) wet.

BP Solar Australia Pty Ltd, PO Box 519, BROOKVALE 2100. Ph: 02-938-5111.

PERMANENT ELECTRIC FENCING

A new concept in fencing materials, the fibreglass fence post, can actually cut fencing costs for today's farmer by up to 50 percent. Uni-Star fence posts are made of 'stronger than steel' glass fibres bonded together with non-conductive thermo resin. It is warranted not to short out or allow power to be siphoned off from your fence-line – this means the post is the insulator. Uni-Star posts resemble star posts but are much lighter and 20 or more can be carried at one time. They have been UV stabilised to withstand the hard Australian climate, will not rust, rot or corrode and they're flame retardant. The posts are simple to set using a standard post hole driver and wire clips, providing quick and easy installation. They are virtually maintenance free as the natural physical properties of fibreglass allow the post to flex above the ground, not in it, at all outdoor temperatures. They are the ideal solution for permanent or temporary electric fencing, strip grazing or as droppers. For suppliers and prices please contact:

Uni-Star Pty Ltd, 128 Young St, CARRINGTON 2294. Ph: 049-694-307.

GRASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE

NEW SOUTH WALES

MEDOWIE 2 adjacent 5 ac blocks, one with new 3/BR house. Ph & power connected. Rain water tank, septic system. Wallaroo State Forest on 2 sides. Environmentally aware neighbours. Cement posts but no wire. Eastern grey kangaroos & red-neck wallabies come to graze on the gently sloped nth facing paddock & water at the dam. 45 mins to Newcastle & Nelson Bay. The lot \$160,000, 5 ac & house \$110,000, 5 ac & dam \$50,000. Ph: 049-281-336 AII.

TWEED VALLEY - UKI 3.5 ha. Magnificent views, perm creek, power, ph avail, school bus. \$27,000. Ph: 03-386-0051.

1¹/₄ AC, 20 mins nth Gympie, flat, forested \$15,000 ONO. Ph: 066-791-484.

BATEMANS BAY - MILTON AREA, River front Clyde River, 63 secluded ac, weekender, hobby farm, fruit trees, canoeing, bike riding, caravan, tractor & farm mach, incl. \$145,000. Ph: 02-575-740 AH.

NORTH COAST, EARTH HOME 13 ac bush setting, views, character, gardens, workshed etc, 1/2 hr Grafton, Nymboida. \$126,000. Ph: 02-871-5203 or 02-779-208.

TAYLORS ARM beautiful rainforest retreat, perm river, stone house on 1/3 share 43 ac, no power, swimming hole, s/c stove & 40 gal HW tank, ph avail, \$33,000 ONO. Ph: 065-695-473.

ROCKY HALL SE NSW 240 ac. 4 blocks f/hold, 50% clear, national estate boundaries, gravity feed potential to 1/2 property from perm water. 2 WD access, total privacy, abundant wildlife. \$1000 ac. Write Steve M, 34 Toalla St, PAMBULA 2549.

2 B/R RIVERSTONE HOME, near completion, tank water, well, est garden, fruit trees. Peaceful location near Murrumbidgee River. Betty E Spencer, RMB Hume Hwy, BOWNING 2582.

DRESS CIRCLE - 1 ac overlooking sml nth rivers hamlet. Town water, elec, ph, walk to school, pub, shops, police & PO. Also sml riverfront lease for grazing. \$16,000. No offers. Ph: owner 066-322-450.

FOR LEASE OR SALE - 5 ac organic vegie farm, chemical free, NASA cert applied for, irrigated, deep creek, 2 ac in production, 2 B/R house, elec, gas, ph, host farm WWOOFers. Near new tractor 20 HP diesel Iseki, rotary hoe, 4WD bogie trailer. 5 berth c/van. Only hardworking, determined chemically aware people need apply. No dreamers, no pets, wildlife reserve, lease by March 90 or for sale. Ph: 066-492-577.

HOBBY FARM 8 ac, old 3/BR home, rates 1989 \$54.00. Sheds, fowl pens, young orchard, 2 rotary hoes, seed planter, 4 cows, poultry. Main road frontage, perm water, irrigation licence, roadside stall, daily mail, school bus. 10 km to town, selling owing to illness \$85,000 ONO. Ph: 076-664-171.

UPPER EDEN CREEK near Kyogle: 240 ac freehold, rainforest regrowth, slopes and valley, creek access, \$49,000. Taeni, Barkersvale, KYOGLE 2474. Ph: 066-897-231.

DEADLINES: GR 78 - FEBRUARY 23RD
GR 79 - APRIL 20TH

7.54 HA, LARGELY FERTILE land Kyogle area. 2 B/R & S/O modern home, septic toilet, solar power, backup generator, magnif views. Some bearing fruit trees, 2 young orchards, mixed fruit, 200 trees reafforestation project started, 40 tea tree oil trees. 5 sml dams, unsailing creek frontage, large diesel pump. \$103,000 ONO. Ph: 066-331-386.

BONALBO - w/board & fibro house on concrete stumps, large fenced block backing onto 200 ac town common, room for vegies, chooks, horse etc. House comprises entr hall, 3 B/R, lounge, dining/kitchen, bathroom, laundry, screened alumin windows, gas HWS-cooker-heater, sewer, phone and town water connected, lge detached garage/workshop \$35,500. Plus lge corner block in same town, \$6500. Ph: 066-215-612.

18 KM NORTH OF NIMBIN: 50 fertile ac with 4/BR home, lge verandah, in beautiful valley oppos. Nat Pk, creek access, largely cleared, frost-free, \$112,000. Apply YULUNGA, Barkersvale 2474. Ph: 066-897-231.

HOUSE ON 5 AC farm land on river 10 mins nth Crescent Head, fertile soil, town water, elec, bitumen rd, school bus, secluded beaches. \$85,000 ONO. Ph: 065-654-770. Ellis, Belmore River, VIA GLADSTONE 2440.

100 AC NTII COAST NSW, 1 hr to Grafton, 1¹/₂ hr to Coffs Harbour, some cleared good pasture, 4 dams, fruit trees & gardens, 3/BR mudbrick cottage to lockup stage, long views, fully fenced, 2 WD access. \$120,000 ONO. Ph: 066-494-234.

28 PERMACULTURE, biodynamic ac, Bowraville, midnorth coast. Half forest, tree ferns, secluded, subtropical orchards, garden. Fully fenced rotational grazing. Perm river, creek, dams. Solid imaginative stone, mudbrick timber 2 storey 16 sq solar house. New comb stove. Plus river cabins, sheds. 25 mins beach. The slog's done! \$130,000. Ph: 048-475-033. LGE OLD HOUSE historic Gulgong needs some work 1³/₄ ac, landscaped organic gardens, sml nut orchard, many native trees, within town boundary \$60,000 ONO. Great potential, all convs, suit prof/l or craftspeople. Ph: Kay Binns, 063-741-029, 127 Herbert St, GULGONG 2852.

QUEENSLAND

MACKAY NTII QLD mountain property, 57 ha lightly treed pasture, undulating, scenic, perm streams, dam, platypus. 3 B/R home, concrete fence posts, 5 paddocks, yards, sheds. 2nd powered house site. Ph, school bus, adjacent rainforest, suit tourism subdivision or M/O. \$150,000. Ph: 08-398-2348.

CAPRICORN COAST, QLD 25 ac, 2 storey solar powered house set in natural bush, 18 km from Yeppoon. 2 horses, chooks, estab organic veg/herb garden, irrigation, 2 propagation, 1 retail nursery. Sml estab herb business, heaps of potential. Details PO Box 621, YEPPOON 4703. Ph: 079-397-621.

CALOUNDRA'S FERTILE HINTERLAND below Maleny Ranges 11 ac, perm creek, shady rock pools, magic waterfall, close school, rail, 20 mins to beaches, \$68,000. Ph: 071-947-658.

SALE CENTRL QLD 2 B/R fully renov cottage on 4 f/hold ac, power & water, rich black soil, grow anything. Beautiful setting, sit 60 mls west of Emerald. \$28,000. Contact Mrs L J Heitink, 'Sanctuary', CMB BOGAN-TUNGAN 4702. (Ill health forces sale).

392 ACRES opposite Coolmunda Dam (suitable all water sports) 10 mins Inglewood. Undulating parkland & forest, easy access, \$57,000. 1/2 share avail or swap, anything considered. Write to D Horton, C/- PO, MURWILLUMBAH 2484.

STH-EAST QLD - 17 ac of undulating forest with 2 dams. Wooden cabin with comb stove, HWS with 1000 gal head, 6000 gal cement rainwater tank. Organically grown garden & fruit trees, gravity fed. Power and ph avail, school bus to local schools, 14 km away. Ph: 071-632-125.

9 MTH OLD FULLY FURN lowset house on 10 ac, carpet, lounge, d/room & 3 B/R, tiled kitchen, bathroom & laundry, fridge, freezer & w/mach. Ph & elec connected, plus 20 x 10 shed, 10 x 10 shed, 5000 gal tank on house, 1000 gal tank on 10 x 10 old tractor (works) & plough. Sit Mt Fox, 65 km from Ingham (bitumen road). School 2 km from house. Price \$86,000. A & M Paterson Ph: 077-763-771.

COOLOOLA Rainbow Beach hinterland 30 mins east of Gympie. Fully/furn mudbrick cottage, solar power, ph, on 30 ac, fully fenced, 2 springfed dams, creek, 2 high carports, selfpropelled slasher, ex-pottery shed, waterpump. \$65,000. Ph: 07-203-5625.

MACKAY SARINA AREA 1/2 ac with bore, very quiet timbered settlement, landscapers dream, with natural water course. Close to quiet beach. \$24,000. Ph: 079-564-184.

KUTTABUL - 20 mins nth Mackay - 160 ac virgin bushland valley, sml creek flats, pole & slab timber dwelling. 4 kms to school etc. Power, ph & bore. \$95,000. Ph: 079-540-231.

CLAIRVIEW BEACH 1 hr sth of Mackay on Qld's beautiful coastline, absolute beach front allotment, power, bitumen road, good fishing, quiet peaceful, excl views Qld coastal islands, ideal invest, build on for your retirement. Ph: 079-416-062.

14 AC 4 B/R HOME nearly complete, sheds, 2 dams, windmill, well, seasonal creek, 250 macadamia nut trees, majority bearing, 50 pecans, 30 mangoes, 20 avocados, citrus. Solar power & H/W, state power avail, ph. 40 km Rockhampton, 300 m elev. \$60,000. Ph: 079-382-162.

TASMANIA

HUON VALLEY 50 ac, 35 flat, timber house, perm stream, 30 mins commuting distance from Hobart. Very private, million dollar views of Huon & further. Excel soil, nth aspect, \$80,000. Ph: 002-921-663.

CLASSIFIEDS

PROPERTY FOR SALE

TASMANIA

'PIONEER HOUSE' near Pioneer, 33 sq homestead on 5 ac, makes extensive use of Tasmanian timbers. 4 B/R and large upstairs lounge, comb stove, 19 sq garage/workshop, well fenced & watered, some bush, PO, shops & school nearby, ready for immediate occupancy. \$95,000 ONO. Ph: Graeme Briton at 003-542-458.

HASTINGS BAY SE coast 5 ha (12 ac) good soil, sun homesites, access sml creek, 110 m waterfront. Road frontage power, ph avail, \$16,500. Doug Wynter, PO 46, FRANKLIN 7113. Ph: 002-663-541.

BRUNY ISLAND 9 ac light bush, water views \$20,000. Ph: 002-931-130.

N/W AREA, STH NIETTA, 2 B/R & s/r room country cottage on 1 ac, excel bore, estab gardens, school bus passes house, workshop, outbuildings, on good bitumen road, postman delivers daily, good carpets, drapes, nothing to spend, \$52,000. Ph: 004-291-298.

VICTORIA

GENOA DISTRICT 4 1/2 ac property in quiet bush location with unlimited water from adjoining creek, 1 km to Princes Hwy & approx 1/2 hr to coastal resorts of Mallacoota & Eden, improvements incl shed & new fencing. \$29,000. Ph: 051-588-240.

DIMBOOLA solid brick residence 6 rooms, pressed metal ceilings, bay windows, lead-light, slate/pine bathroom, native garden, orchard, veg/garden lge block, 3 mins walk to shops, \$89,000. Ph: 053-891-712.

FAR EAST GIPPSLAND 71 ac secluded slopes, lovely valley, 15 mins schools, shop, 30 mins coast, 10 mins Errundera Plateau. Realistic price \$34,000. P Taylor, C/- PO, KERANG 3579.

WEST AUSTRALIA

LAND 40 HA rich river loam suit animal/bird lover, tourist sanctuary, estab 1980, lge 4 B/R brick home, lge garage/workshop, 30 x 60 all-purpose shed, 18,000 gal rainwater well with windmill plus bore, estab lawns, gardens, trees, 25 km sth Geraldton, power, ph, popular fishing. Sell \$219,000. Ph: 099-261-171.

COMMUNITIES

'EXODUS' a large group of people from all walks of life escaping from structured society. Self-suff by nature & ready to commit to a planned exodus soon. Contact: Ron & Vera Modra, 55 Gilbert St, GILBERTON 5081.

SHARE (1/10) FOR SALE dream forest 8 km from Nimbin, sheltered by foothills of Mt Nardi, bordering Nightcap Range Nat. Park & Mulgum Creek. 2/3 property densely forested with pockets sub-tropical rainforest in sheltered gullies, pure water. Provisional M/O. \$10,000. Contact: Arron Manfield, 6/121 Curlew St, BONDI 2026. Ph: 02-365-1159.

MURWILLUMBAH 1/7 SHARE 300 ac hill property, 3 yo, 1 B/R sml home, creek at door, superb location. Total privacy 4WD access only. \$47,500. C/- Lot 2, Ageton Rd, ALBERTON 4207. Ph: Mr Currie, 07-834-3200, extn 226.

MATURE COUPLE seeking to purchase share in new or estab community, prefer mid-nth coast reasonably close to beach or river. Ph: 02-818-5214.

MOUNTAIN RETREAT on sml M/O, 7 km to Nimbin, 2 storey house, frostfree, legal shed, nth facing bordering Nat. Park, high rainfall, fruit trees, 4WD access. Price neg. Contact: Vita Tantra, C/- PO, NIMBIN 2480. FAR SOUTH COAST NSW Wandellow Valley - near Cobargo, 1/4 share in unique 90 ac, surrounded by state forest. \$9000 ONO. Ph: 066-878-091.

SHARES AVAIL for people motivated to help estab Healing Centre & Spiritual Community on 100 ac. Currently running growth workshops, expansion envisaged. Send SAE to YULUNGA, Barkersvale 2474. Ph: 066-897-321.

AVALON has shares avail for environmentally minded people. Surveyed home-sites, all-weather access roads, spring water connected. 360 forested ac incl 100 ac of common & perm winding creek. Secure company title, price \$13,700 for 3-5 ac. Full details: Sophia Andrea, PO Box 136, NIMBIN 2480. Ph: 066-891-305.

ROBERTSON/BOWRAL AREA 1/5 share 126 ac, rich red agricultural land with remnant rainforest & wet sclerophyll forest. Intend to evolve sustainable farm with nursery. Permaculture design has been obtained. \$110,000 for land only, near Eukarima Steiner school. Abundant water, unlimited potential. Ph: Pam Oslear 048-682-287 AH.

NTH NSW 1/25 SHARE 960 ac, M/O community. House - near completion, plus furniture. \$20,000 ONO. Ph: Janelle 066-214-011.

WANTED TO RENT

CONSCIENTIOUS YOUNG MAN requires cheap independent shelter, Busselton area WA, w/wo elec. Malcolm Ford, C/- PO, KADINA 5554.

WANTING TO SHARE A HOUSE overlooking the ocean near Perth, where I can set up my Reiki business & live. Ph: Lyndamae Gullock 08-337-4417.

CARING SML FAMILY looking for cottage/farmhouse to rent or caretake, need room for chooks, vegie garden etc, longterm, close to Cairns. Ph: 070-577-554 ask for Ann.

URGENT - HOUSE/SHACK/COTTAGE to rent can be run-down, country Vic approx 1 hr from Melb. 1 or 2 adults, 1 child, low income. Ph: 03-416-1140 or 126 Keele St, COLLINGWOOD 3066.

GUY SEEKS HOUSE, caravan, share house or room to rent around Murray Bridge or near, anything considered short term, long term. M. Lush, 34 Frances St, MURRAY BRIDGE 5253.

FOR RENT

HONEST, SOBER, SPIRITUAL 40+, own transport, to share house, interested in organic gardening, oriental cats. No drugs, \$50 week plus half expenses. MORNINGTON 3931. Ph: 059-755-205.

3-4 B/R OLDER STYLE HOUSE on sml ac, avail April 1990. Nth coast NSW close to town, mains power, ph avail, bore, 2 water tanks, sorry no cats, quiet dog OK. Please no religious cranks or hard drugs. Refs essential, space for chooks, garden. Bond \$300, rent \$110 pw. Ph: 066-667-168.

2 B/R COTTAGE (furnished) on secluded 50 ac, 40 km to Mudgee, 12V power, gas fridge/stove, 2 dams & orchards, partly fenced, suit people willing to help upgrade house. Send SAE to R Barlow, 7 Pinkstone Pl, McKELLAR 2617.

TO LEASE 5 ac chemical free vegie farm, irrigated 2 ac in production, machinery, perm creek, house, NASA applied for, owner retiring. Ph: 066-492-577.

STUDIO/WORKSHOP avail for rent. Term/rent neg. Rustic stone building in bush setting. MOOROODUC 3933. Ph: 059-788-356.

**DEADLINES: GR 78 – FEBRUARY 23RD
GR 79 – APRIL 20TH**

PROPERTY WANTED

PICTURE BOOK SETTING tranquil mountain views with or without dwelling, any state consid. PO Box 652, KALAMUNDA 6076. Ph: 09-390-4374.

MONEY TO SPEND! Help, we have \$40,000 for house & land in NSW only. Land must be on its own title, phone reverse charges 079-738-607 or write to Richard & Julia Waylett, PO Box 153, TANNUM SANDS 4680.

OPPORTUNITIES

NATURES WEALTH quality herbal products could lead you to the lifestyle you always wanted. For full details of products & business opport send to Greg Hill, 64 Robe St, THE GRANGE 4051.

ORGANIC BANANA BUSINESS growing, ripening & drying organic bananas. Excel outlet locally. Beautiful secluded bush setting, 10 mins from Nambucca Heads & beaches. Incl dwelling, good income, room for expansion, long lease, low rent. \$50,000. Ph: 065-682-546.

TASMANIA nice opportunity to learn about allround farming, i.e. milking, cows, pigs, fruit/trees, veg/garden, fencing etc. Is there a couple out there that is seriously interested a.s.a.p. for approx 1 yr. We do have free accom & meals, plus sml wage. There is more help through the year from WWOOFers (Willing Workers on Organic Farms). We are grade 1 certified by NASAA (Nat. Ass. for Sustainable Agriculture). We are Willem (50) & Marianne (46) Bekkema, & live in Sth Tasmania. Corresp to: PO Box 185, GEEVESTON 7116.

GRASSIFIEDS

OPPORTUNITIES

POSITION AVAILABLE for stonemason or person/s with similar building experience for large partly complete sandstone homestead on a cattle station in Centrl Qld, beginning March 90 for 6 mths. Tools & equipment supplied, cottage accom avail. Please write to John Graham, Withersfield Station, WILLOWS 4702.

OPPORTUNITY EXISTS in Vic to gain practical experience growing 2 ac organically of potatoes. Share work/expenses. Write with SAE: 'Potato Grower, C/- PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

LOVABLE GARDEN ORNAMENTS paint your own, enjoyable creative pastime, potential income, lovely presents, \$100 starter kit avail incl: paint set, 20 best selling items, colour photos & catalogue, hints, instructions & advice. Free packing/rail freight anywhere Vic, other states neg. Approx 1 week deliv. Send M/O to L. Lawrence, 209 Belgrave-Gembrook Rd, MENZIES CREEK 3159. Ph: 059-684-050.

TIMBER AVAIL - red cedar, silver ash, camphor laurel, black wattle & others from trees I planted myself. Visitors welcome especially WWOOFers. Bob Whitworth, 2 Deserio Rd, Cedar Pocket, GYMPIE 4570. Ph: 071-866-147.

CARETAKER yabby farm Mudgee district NSW. Require own caravan, ideal for retirement, some light work with smal wages if desired, mountain views, free elec, opportunity for gardener as water is abundant. Ph: 02-436-1211.

HOUSEKEEPER NANNY REQUIRED loving capable woman to live in, assist caring for two girls, aged 7 & 8 years. In exchange for full board & food. Home in bushland, Blue Mountains. Character references, own car. 2 days off per/week, for 5 mths period 1990. Ph: Susan 047-573-164.

NEED EXTRA INCOME become more independent with additional income or full-time business. Send long SAE to Mrs. A. Peart(GR), 31 Marsh St, NARANGBA 4504.

SERVICES OFFERED

MUDBRICKS pressed on site anywhere Tassie. Use your own resources & labour, up to 200 bricks p/hour, 400 x 200 x 150 mm, 50c p/brick. More details? Ph: Pete 003-761-127.

'FORTY PLANS For Low Cost Homes of Mudbrick Stone & Timber'. Mail \$27.00, post incl for 'The Earth Builders Construction Detail and Plan Catalogue', to John Barton, 31 Sharp St, NEWTOWN 3220. Ph: 052-224-249.

WANTED

WANTED RELIABLE honest, animal loving person to share country house on lge prop with woman in early 30's. Low rent, own room. Write to: Deborah, C/- PO, BARADINE 2396.

DEADLINES: GR 78 – FEBRUARY 23RD
GR 79 – APRIL 20TH

WANTED TO BUY handmade teddy bears, rag dolls, old teddies, old cloth dolls. L. Milston, PO Box 573, QUEANBEYAN 2620. MAN AGED 65 TO 75 very low rent in return for gardening & maintenance for widow. No views to personal involvement. Pat Clarke, PO Box 646, GARBUTT 4818.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM FOLK who have self-built on self-suff concept, view to learn from your experience, also from people who are in the process of or planning on doing so. Free labour given for the opport to learn, within 2 hr drive from Melb. Bill, PO Box 1059, LALOR 3075.

NATIVE PLANT MATERIALS – wattle blossom, gum nuts, etc. All types, fully dried, native materials considered. Large quant preferred. Good prices plus freight paid. Contact Peter Hunt, PO Box 53, NORTH-COTE 3070. Ph: 03-482-2677.

CALENDAR EVENTS

HARVEST PICNIC, Werribee Park, Sunday Feb 25, 100's of stalls with an exciting range of Melbourne's best foods & drinks, lots of entertainment. Come (by train or car – only 30 mins from Geelong or Melb), taste & enjoy. For more info contact Glenys or Yvonne. Ph: 03-687-1392.

EXCHANGES

SWAP SHARE OR SALE – 42 ac overlooking Hokianga harbour for coastal co-operative or property. Magnificent views & sunsets, dams, temp streams, lge shed, fruit trees. Family interests: massage, rebirthing, healing, Tao and the next 11 years. All possibilities considered esp creating co-op on awarenesses above. Ph: Bardyl 042-280-686.

FOR SALE OR SWAP luxurious 42 ft cruising yacht ready to go, value \$175,000 – for property 40 ac plus, with some cash adjustment, prefer Qld but will consider anything. M & S Fabig, C/- Breakwater Marina, TOWNSVILLE 4810.

MISCELLANEOUS

BLUE DAZZLER torch/searchlight. Powerful 30w beam & heavy duty battery rechargeable with ordinary 12V charger. Direct from factory price \$75 each. G. B. Douglas, PO Box 215, WHITSUNDAY 4802. Ph: 079-466-738.

AUSTRALIAN LEAD CRYSTALS, the original rainbow generators, finest quality crystals, 38 shapes, incl spheres, teardrops, pendulums, octagons, hearts & more. Hang in sunny windows for dancing spectrum rainbows. Send SAE for catalogue. Wholesale enq welcome from shops & marketeers. Thora Trading, 'Patanga', Darkwood Rd, THORA 2454. Ph: 066-558-504.

KEROSENE FRIDGE (Silent Night) – full size, good cond, near Nowra. Offers, enq. Ph: 02-520-8196.

AUTHORS WANTED – all types fiction/non-fiction, you don't have to be a latter day Shakespeare. We'll accept almost anything. We're not a 'vanity publisher', don't send manuscripts, long SASE appreciated. New Rainbow Publications, PO Box 244, BROADMEADOW 2292.

RAMMED EARTH COTTAGES are much better than mudbrick. Build one with all the help, advice, equipment from one source. How to do it, what you need. Assistance with design, free for powered rammer buyers –these not heavy, supplied with head fitted. Formwork design and how to make (kit if required). All based on proven DAVROB system, lightweight, strong, for walls, corners, T-sections, stop-ends, accommodates all designs with full instructions on making formwork & how to ram. Send SAE for brief writeup: David Robinson, PO Box 71, BLACKHEATH 2781. Ph: 047-877-432.

SOLAR POWER SYSTEM complete, 8 Solarex 42w panels on manual 180° tracker. Regulator, 24V/240 H/D inverter, 4 x 6V H/D batteries in galvanised cabinet, absol top cond, \$4500. 24V household pressure pump \$220, Arlec 30 H/D battery charger perfect \$400. For details: Ph: 071-292-426, evenings only.

LOW SPEED GENERATORS for windmills, water turbines, steam engines. The definitive book, 'The Homebuilt Dynamo' (1987), 182 pp, 8½ x 12 in hardback. Generator design & construction with ceramic magnets. Complete plans, 268 photographs, step-by-step construction details. Postpaid airmail \$85 (brochure \$5 refundable). Todd-Forbes Publishing, PO Box 3919, AUCKLAND NZ.

EARTHWORMS the 'Speedy Breeder Compost Worm' revolutionises your compost & transforms your garden. Just \$12 per 1000 worms. Price incl postage Aust wide & pamphlet on worm care. Wormborough Farm, PO Box 794, TAREE 2430. Ph: 065-539-633.

WATER PURIFICATION is important for optimal health today. Buying a purifier one must consider price effectiveness & quality. Reverse Osmosis consistently produces a high standard of filtration at a smal price. Several models avail. Gillian Summerbell, PO Box 1519, HORNSBY 2077. Ph: 02-477-2838.

BUILD your own high mileage super-carb. 70 mpg achieved on big 6 Valiants. Write today for free details: 'EPM Power Systems', Box 255N, IVANHOE 3079.

SOLAR POWER complete range of solar modules, deep cycle batteries, inverters, 12/24V lighting, fridges, pumps. Systems designed for your individual requirements. Also Gallagher electric fencing to suit cattle, sheep, goats, pigs etc. Renewable Energy Developments (RENDEV), PO Box 296, CORRIMAL 2518. Ph: 042-710-401 or 042-848-100 AH.

GAS FRIDGE Sibir De Luxe gas/electric 10 cu ft, 2 door, 3 yrs old & in excel cond. Asking \$1300. Ph: 071-292-426, evenings only.

CLASSIFIEDS

MISCELLANEOUS

KUBOTA DIESEL generator 5 KVA, remote start, new battery, 3 yrs old little use. \$3500 O.N.O. Ph: 054-723-613.

DALRAC MUDBRICK press made only 50 bricks cost \$595 sell \$400 O.N.O. Ph: 057-664-230.

SILVER BEECH Ashford NZ spinning wheel, oil stained, 4 bobbins, lazy kate, spinning mag. Home dyeing, natural plants info. Occasionally used, not now, new condition. Ph: 065-877-167.

CHIP HEATERS, no elec needed for instant h/water, operates from town or tank water supply. Eng: 'Heaters', 358 Centenary St, ALBURY 2640. Ph: 060-215-469.

BATTERY SYSTEM & 24 volt generator. 12 ex-Telecom storage batteries 500 a/h, VGC, & 1 KVA generator (petrol) for alternative power \$1200. Ph: 07-354-2896.

ALTERNATIVE PLANS including wind generators, methane digestors, ethyl alcohol, solar stills, mini-work cars - 5-10 hp - & more. Send SAE: Alternative Plans, 23 Glenore St, MITCHELTON 4053.

FOOD AND KITCHEN

HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS - mill your own stonground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Assoc. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDEMONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

PUBLICATIONS

THE OWNER BUILDER MAG/ ZINE Want to be a successful owner builder? The Owner Builder Magazine has plans, money saving ideas, advice and articles on successful owner builders. The Owner Builder Magazine is available from newsagents or by subscription. \$19 for 6 issues or \$36 for 12 issues. PO Box 974, BENDIGO 3550.

SELF SUFFICIENCY and recycling booklets - parts 1 and 2. \$4 each plus many other titles. Self published & reasonably priced. The Last Step, PO Box 110, EDWARDSTOWN 5039. BOOKS - horticulture, gardening, native plants, mail order, lge selection. Send for free catalogue, Goondooloo Book Service, PO Box 288 GATTON 4343. Ph: STD free 008-073-103 anytime.

AUSTRALASIAN SURVIVOR. The magazine that prepares its readers for the fast coming hard times. \$2 for sample. PO Box 11, Dickson 2602.

TUNING IN Announcing a new concept in news bulletins. Join our dynamic team of over-unity experimenters by subscribing today. A discussion forum with all the latest on the free energy scene. Only \$25 for 12 issues (\$3 sample copy). Write today: Free Energy Connection, Box 255N, IVANHOE 3079.

DEADLINES: GR 78 - FEBRUARY 23RD
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NEXUS NEW TIMES magazine is an independent publication bringing you the essential facts behind today's news. We describe new ways of living which improve your mental and physical health and enable you to thrive in the late 20th century. Take part in positive change - subscribe now! \$12 per year. NEXUS New Times, PO Box A556, SYDNEY SOUTH 2000.

BOOKS 'new and used', farm, needlework, plus numerous subjects. Send SAE with interests for list. Pamela Fenwick, PO Box 263, MAYFIELD 2304.

GRASS ROOTS issues 1-54. Good order, offers to PO Box 97, MILTON 2538. Ph: 044-553-175.

PRAIRIE WOLF PRESS. Primitive Wilderness Skills by John & Geri McPherson: 'Makin' Meat 1'; 'Makin' Meat 2'; 'Primitive Fire & Cordage'; 'Brain Tan Buckskin'; 'Deer from Field to Freezer'; 'Wilderness Cooking Methods'; 'Containers 1'. \$5.95 ea. Send SSAE for full catalogue: J W Survival Supplies Pty Ltd, PO Box 344, MULGRAVE NTII 3170. Ph: 03-560-9360.

AUSTRALASIAN HEALTH AND HEALING - Journal of Alternative Medicine, Australia's major health care quarterly emphasising self healing and prevention of illness through measures which raise body defences. Sold at most newsagents and health shops. \$3.50 each & by subscription \$12.50 per four issues (1 year), \$23 eight issues (2 years). Write: Australasian Health and Healing, 29 Terrace St, KINGSLIFF 2487.

UNICORN - Australia's leading New Age magazine. ET - is he really there? Cover story (teenagers and drugs etc); interview with John Farnham and Daniele; pesticides, latest research; expose on organic farming; shamanism; conflict resolution; environment; Greenhouse Effect; dolphin story. All this and much more, Unicorn Magazine, PO Box 125, NIMBIN 2480. Ph: 066-891-500 or on sale at your newsagent.

TEXTILE FIBRE FORUM covers all the textile arts in the Australian region, and includes New Zealand. It is a high quality, 60 page, colour magazine. Subscribe for \$16/year for 3 issues to: AFTA, Sturts Crafts Centre, PO Box 192, MITTAGONG 2575. 2 year subscription is \$31. For a sample issue send \$5. Make cheques payable to AFTA. A truly exciting publication.

ORGANIC GROWING. Australia's national quarterly magazine for chemical-free farmers and gardeners. Practical 'how to' advice, plus news of the organic scene the world over. \$2.80 per issue from newsagents or \$10 pa by subscription (Aus); \$14 pa (O/seas). PO Box 228, ULVERSTONE 7315.

DONKEY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA, for information on magazine subscription, publications, books and the care of donkeys. Contact Donkey Society of Australia, PO Box 438, MORWELL 3840.

GARDEN AND ORCHARD

HONEY LOCUST SEED. Propagate your own, \$10 packet 60 seeds, postage & info incl. Yarralaw Shade & Fodder Trees, Yarralaw Rd, BUNGONIA 2580.

SEEDS OF UNUSUAL useful plants, open pollinated, easy grow, oriental Asian vegics, subtropical fruits, spices, fragrants, curiosities, spices, cottage garden flowers 60 cents pkt. Mail order only. No visitors please. For list send 2 stamps to L Blaney, Wallace Rd, BEACHMERE 4510.

RAINFOREST SEEDS 3/4 of Australia's rainforest have gone. Help repair the earth by regenerating rainforest on your land. Please send 2 stamps for our new seed list and hints on growing rainforest seed. Write to Bellingen Valley Rainforest Seeds, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454.

KINGS SEEDS - 60 new varieties. The new range of 460 seed varieties includes herbs, dried flower seeds, bee plant seeds, insect repellants, oriental and gourmet vegetable seeds. Send \$5.80 for our new glossy 1989-91 colour catalogue. Helpful hints on how to grow and use the plants are included or send SAE for a price list. 2 wall charts - \$4 each - Culinary or Remedial herbs and how to use them. P & H \$2 per order. Kings Herbs Seeds, PO Box 14, GLENBROOK 2773.

SEED: FRUIT & NUT. Over 200 species, 125 personally collected, also natives, gingers, bamboo, timber, etc, specialising in the hard-to-obtain. For list, send SASE to Fruit Spirit Botanical Garden, DORROUGHBY 2480.

COMPANION PLANTING CHART Over 90 vegetables, herbs and fruits, including plants as insect repellants. Mail order \$4.50 (postage included). SOW WHEN CHART Suggested sowing times for 100 vegetables, herbs and flowers. Mail order \$5 (postage included). 'Plum Products' (G) RMB 2907, BRUTHEN 3885.

COMPREHENSIVE CATALOGUE Australian native seeds 1800 species. Price \$6 posted. Bliss Partnership, 'The Cedars', BUNDARRA 2359.

LIVESTOCK

14 MTI MULE - Newcastle, \$45. Ph: 049-453-377 or Box 174, BELMONT 2280. ANGORA RABBITS, English, inexpensive pets, various colours. Sample fibre clippings avail for spinners to choose colour. \$55. Ph: 062-540-171.

ANGORA RABBITS grow & spin Angora fibre yourself. 7 times warmer than wool, will shear up to 1 1/2 kg per yr, coloured & white, English & German avail from \$100 each. Angora Rabbit Farm, 'Gamboola', YEOVAL 2868. Ph: 068-464-039.

ARAUCANA FOWL. Settings & chicks for sale, limited numbers. Will rail Vic only. Araucanas are small industrious foragers, excell layers of blue/green eggs, will go broody & raise their young. Ph: 057-947-256 AH for info.

CLASSIFIEDS

COURSES

PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE for city gardens in Melbourne. The course will teach you how to create an attractive, healthy and productive food garden and save energy in your house by establishing a natural system that functions without the use of artificial chemicals. Place: Melbourne, Brunswick City Farm. Dates: 2 weekends, 10 am-5 pm, total 26 hours. Costs: \$180, conc \$130. Pro-Nature, 2 Saxon St, BRUNSWICK 3056. Ph: 03-387-7196.

LEARN GUITAR BY CASSETTE. You can teach yourself to play guitar with this excellent beginners course. Instruction book & cassette cover tuning, chords, solos, music reading, theory, rhythm & much more. Our method is compiled by top professional musicians & teachers & will take you step by step through many facets of guitar playing. No previous knowledge of music is necessary. Cost \$35 (we pay postage). Send chq or M/O to Brunswick Publications, 12/21 Trafalgar St, BELMORE 2192.

WEEKEND WORKSHOPS in crafts, herbs, organic gardening, self-sufficiency skills. Send SAE for details to Burraburroo Herb Farm, RMB 4210, COALVILLE via MOE 3825. Ph: 051-681-234.

PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE 29 April-12 May 1990. Teacher: Lea Harrison. Intensive 12 day residential course, held on farm in Tweed Valley, NE NSW. Course incl lectures, slides, videos, outdoor observation & practice in designing. Limit 20 people. No prev experience necessary. Cost \$500, covers tuition, food & accomm. Further details: Lea Harrison, Stoddarts Road, TYALGUM 2484. Ph: 066-793-242.

WICCAN HOME STUDIES. Select one choice of correspondence training from: Aromatherapy (dipl); certif courses - Psychic Self Development; Psychic Healing, Safety & Security; Wicca. Free brochure for one choice. Clair & Simon Lorde, PO Box 80, LANE COVE 2066. Ph: 02-699-6166 BH. Taped psychic predictive readings, free brochure.

MUDBRICK AND DESIGN Intensive weekend courses run by Brian Woodward, 150 km nth Sydney \$110 incl meals. Send SAE to Earthways, Wollombi 2325.

ORGANIC GARDENING COURSE on working organic farm. For info ring Pia (after 5 pm) 059-688-879 or Box 325, EMERALD 3782.

HOLIDAYS

BED AND BREAKFAST MACKAY close to islands & rainforest ranges, good fishing, dinner available. Friendly hosts. \$55 weekly. Ph: 079-574-777.

A TRANQUIL PLACE with no distracting noisy entertainment, for meditation, birds, wildlife, quiet conversation, walking. 1½ hrs from Brisbane. Accom & all vegetarian meals in our home or detached stone cottage. \$25 per day. Ph: 075-867-385.

DEADLINES: GR 78 - FEBRUARY 23RD
GR 79 - APRIL 20TH

NAMBUCCA VALLEY midway Sydney Brisbane. Holiday in peaceful modern farmhouse. Cattle & pony breeding, fishing & swimming on property, beaches 30 mins, bed/breakfast \$25 pp. Ph: 065-696-245 AH.

FOREST - TASMANIA peaceful country home on 8 ac pasture and bush. Abundant native birds & animals. Magnificent beaches, bush walking, rainforests, fishing. National Parks & rugged West Coast. Historic Stanley 12 km. Bed and country breakfast \$55 two adults. Share host facilities. Dinner available. Ph: 004-583-314.

HANDCRAFTS

HANDMADE 100% PURE coconut oil toilet soap. No animal fat, medicated with papaya, lathers equally well in salt water. Pack of 12 x 120 g cakes \$16 post paid. Island Styles Ltd, PO Box 139, Apia, WESTERN SAMOA.

POTPOURRI & SACHET SUPPLIES. The Australian company with a traditional flavour catering for all requirements, the beginner to the chain store. We select from worldwide sources to offer you the best at the lowest prices in Australia. Economy and traditional potpourris, flowers, fragrant oils plus a wide range of fragrant gifts, incl the most attractive, useful, fragrant pot in Australia. Write for FREE catalogue or visit our showroom. Potpourri & Sachet Supplies, PO Box 53G, NORTHCOTE 3070. Ph: 03-482-2677. Fax: 03-481-1393.

HANDSPUN PURE WOOL, suitable weaving and locker hooking to make rugs, wallhangings etc. \$18 kg. Will prepare your fleece if required. B. Wallace, RMB 4328, Longwarry Rd, DROUIN 3818.

LOVABLE GARDEN ORNAMENTS. Paint your own. Enjoyable, creative pastime, potential income, lovely presents. \$100 starter kit available includes paint set, 20 best selling items, colour photos & catalogue, hints, instructions & advice. Free packing & rail freight anywhere Vic, other states neg. Approx 1 week delivery. Send M/O to L. Lawrence, 209 Belgrave-Gembrook Rd, MENZIES CREEK 3159. Ph: 059-684-050.

HAND MADE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS of Australian timbers, all original designs. I have 'ready to go' two full size dulcimers, one child's dulcimer, three steiner lyras. To order contact Michael, 45 Urquhart St, CASTLEMAINE 3450. Ph: 054-723-839.

A GIFT FOR THAT SPECIAL PERSON. Pure mohair fleece ideal for spinning or blending. \$30 kg plus postage. Bushgate Angora Stud, PO Box 1, BOWRAL 2576. Ph: 048-612-299 or 048-611-174 AH.

SPIN SILK FOR SUMMER! We have caps \$1.50, bells \$37.50, tops, noils etc. Specialist textile book supplier. Russ Siddall, Mill Hill Books, C/- PO, MONTVILLE 4560. Ph: 071-429-333.

ESSENTIAL OILS, potpourri & natural products for aromatherapy & craft work. We are the manufacturers of raw materials for making massage oils, soaps, cosmetics & household products. Our extensive range includes: essential oils, absolutes, fragrances, vegetable oils, gums, waxes, extracts, potpourri, herbs, spices, essences, pottery, containers. Buy from us direct, small or bulk sizes, & save with our low prices. Send stamp for free catalogue to Auroma, PO Box 187, RICHMOND 3121 or call in at our shop at 68 Burwood Road, HAWTHORN 3122.

CERAMIC OCARINAS Beautiful handmade wind instruments for all ages. Seed pod shaped with lovely carved design. Comes with instructions and 15 tunes to play. \$14.95 each (includes p & p). Prompt delivery. Send chq or M/O to Folkcrafts, 96 Cox St, PORT FAIRY 3284.

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

AUSTRALIAN HERB SOCIETY Members receive quarterly magazine, seed from Seed Bank free to members, access to tape lending library. Write: The Secretary, PO Box 110, MAPLETON 4560.

CONTACTS

If you do not wish your address to be published, you may prefer to have replies sent C/- PO Box 242, Euroa 3666 (our address) and we'll forward them - unopened - to you. There is a nominal charge of \$2 for this service, so please add this to the amount when calculating the cost of your advertisement.

QUIET COUNTRY GUY 35 single, likes bushwalking, music, motorcycles, seeks honest understanding patient single woman 30-40 for friendship, penfriend. Reply: Graham, 'Stratholm', MIRROOL 2665.

HELLO I'm a guy 35 yr young, 5 ft 4 in, dark hair, fit, I have a deep respect for the land, I am seeking a girl soulmate who is affectionate, sincere & gentle. I enjoy bushwalking, travelling, gardening, have a cottage with 5 ac near Ballarat. Please write to Mick, C/- 46 Austin St, FOOTSCRAY 3011.

GUY 33 seeks a fit intelligent & practical female companion in love & life. I'm sensitive broadminded well travelled with a semi-professional career & 200 ac. Doug, PO Box 232, MAREeba 4880.

LADY 47 gay would like to meet others in the Blue Mountains for friendship, companionship & fun. I enjoy almost everything. Dislike drinkers & not too good with children. Please write: 66 Delmonte Ave, MEDLOW BATH 2780.

GOOD LOOKING country girl living on parents' sheep farm. Like to correspond with outgoing nature loving guy between 34 to 39. Miss E Stampfli, 'Bernina', CAPERTEE 2846.

GRASSIFIEDS

CONTACTS

FIT ACTIVE AUSSIE 67 yo non-S/D handyman gardener, varied interests, own my home inland mid nth coast, financially secure, seeks non-S/D lady over 45. Jack NSW, C/- PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

YOUNG LADY COMPANION sought by quiet fellow 39. Non-smoker has farm & therapeutic type work near pretty town. Wide interests. Please write to: David, PO Box 48, GRAFTON 2460.

EARTHY LIBRAN GUY 25 needs wonderful soul conscious spiritual lady 25-30, veg, meditator, strong, imminent Brett, 23 Austin St, FAIR LIGHT 2094.

MAN mud building, has beautiful life to share

MALE 18-45, 5'8"-6'2", 140-180 lbs, with slim n/smoker lady 40-50 interests classical music, art, swimming, canoeing, prospecting, golf. Ph: 054-632-353.

MALE 40, lady from 18 upwards to live on farm, prefer natural blonde, child OK, to form a casual to perm relationship. Rodney Williamson, 8 Wavelley Lane, Silver Spur, TEXAS 4385.

WICCAN WOMAN seeks coven or other
solitaries Kyogle area. Write Kerry Bell,
Sawpit Creek, GREVILLIA 2474.

QUIET FEMALE, late 20's n/smoker, n/drinker, slim 164 cm, loves plants, animals. Would like to meet sincere handymen type guy & together find sanctuary to escape a decaying world. 'Lorna', PO Box 456, MURWILLUMBAH 2484.

PROFESSIONAL LADY, Sydney, European, 60's financially secure, fit, young at heart, articulate, sensitive, positive, nature lover, great sense of humour. Interests include classical music, theatre, hiking, swimming, environment, intelligent conversation, reading, home making, seeks gentleman similar circumstances & attributes, living nearby maybe in the country, for lasting meaningful relationship. Tina, C/- PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

GEELONG REGION 28 yo single bloke moving to Geelong-Colac area early 1990. Looking to meet some locals around the same age (male & female) when I move. I'm outdoors type, fit, independent, like the beach. Non-smoker/drinker/drugs. Write to PO Box 2174, St KILDA WEST 3182 or Ph: John 057-978-275.

MALE 37, 5 ft 10 in slim build, attractive, no ties, n/s, social drinker, health conscious, self motivated, warm, sensitive, intelligent, environmentally conscious, peace loving, love nature, gardening, renovating. Seeking attractive woman to mid 30's who is warm, loving, compatible, feminine, caring, broadminded, health conscious, honest, happy, who loves life. Write to: John, C/- PO, NORTHCOTE 3070.

GENT 44, n/s, n/drinker, living mid-nth coast
seeks lady for permanent caring relationship.
I like nature, visiting friends, cooking, music,
books. If it appeals to you to make a living
on the basis of a chemical-free market garden,
please write to: Al, C/- PO Box 242, EUROA
3666.

**DEADLINES: GR 78 – FEBRUARY 23RD
GR 79 – APRIL 20TH**

INTELLIGENT CARING MALE 38, fit, healthy, happy, enjoys everything natural, living on quiet ac near Mt. Tamborine. Wishing to share loving lifestyle with lady 18-25 with view of family life. All letters answered. Jon, Box 2431, SOUTHPORT 4215.

MAGICAL, SEXY, IMMORTAL, pantheistic female, would like to meet man similar for love. Must be into his heart, earth magic & ecstasy. Also like to meet other immortals for friendship & community. I am earthy, love life & nature & have always wanted to share these things with others. 34 yo attractive, long hair, if all this strikes a chord within please write to Starwind, C/- 23 Hutt St, MT LAWLEY 6050, interstate welcome.

MALE, early 40's, medium build, 5 ft 4 in, seeking a slim, easygoing lady, between 31-42. I am " " with a smile. I

31-40. I enjoy all outdoor activities. I am a
n/s but enjoy the occasional social drink. If
you want to know more write to John Walters,
C/- 139 Stumpy Gully Rd, HASTINGS 3915.
IS THERE A GUY 45-55 out there who is
on the self-sufficiency path & would like to
correspond with a Brisbane lady who is
presently making the break? Although I'm
not heavily into looks I prefer tallish men who
aren't fat. I don't smoke & rarely drink. I'm
sensuous, feminine, independent & unconven-
tional with a well developed sense of humour.
Looks, well I'm 5 ft 6 in slim & scrub up
well. Replies to Julia, C/- PO Box 242,
EUROA 3666.

FEMALE 25, slim attractive, 5 ft 6 in, nice natured, needs country/christian man to share peaceful loving P/R. Must be attractive 5 ft 10 in or taller, nice natured, easygoing, up to 35, not overweight. Caroline, C- PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

FEMALE 'PAL' needed, age open, by tall 47 yo, retired, worthy, sensitive independent, kind, n/s, slim healthy, unique, complex, not bad looking (it helps), not conceited, very modest, male with bare feet & pony tail. Divorced, capable, honest, sensible, fullmoon howler, Cancer, loves travel, boats, music, organic gardening, Australiana, Clydesdale horses, bushwalking, beaches, oceans, good company, history, quiet times. Has 5 ac chemical free farm, modest house to lease, when my new 36 foot yacht finished April 90 to begin the next stage of life's adventures, the Barrier Reef. Ladies who are genuinely without ties, are financially independent, n/s, n/d who are ready to be in anything. Write as whatever we want to do we CAN AND WILL. Hobo, C/- PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

CAPRICORN MALE, single 40, seeks lady for permanent relationship, country Mackay, Qld. Home on 2 ac with a peaceful lifestyle, children welcome. Interests gardening, music, camping, fishing, bushwalking. Looking to spend future years with an individual, loving, secure partner. Martin, PO Box 5217, Mail Centre MACKAY 4741.

FEMALE COMPANION wanted to share lifestyle cruising on a 30 ft steel yacht coast & overseas. lady to be over 30 n/s, adventurous, prepared to rough it, like diving, share cost. Interested person please write: Barry, PO Box 639, Wynnum Central, BRISBANE 4178.

SINGLE CATHOLIC MAN 33, good looking, quiet, honest, fit, n/s, n/drinker, enjoys outdoor life, building, gardening, planting, bushwalking, cycling, jogging, painting. Wishes to meet marriage minded single Catholic girl, 24 to 28, any nationality with similar interests. Write Andrew, Lot 34 Combined St, WING-HAM 2429.

UNATTACHED QUEENSLANDER 46, permanent job & accommodation, keen horseman, seeks n/s country woman with no ties, view matrimony & children. Reply Manager, PO Box 60, CANUNGRA 4275.

RETIRED CATTLEMAN 64, has yacht & 40 ac bush near 1770. Seeks lady who loves bush & boats, n/s, n/d. Write Allan, Lot 60 Murphy Rd, M/S 1929, MIRIAMVALE 4677.

NIKKIE RODRIGUEZ, Filipino male 5 ft 6 in, good sense humour, n/s, n/d, loves cooking, animals, simple country lifestyles, mechanical minded, penpal, writing different countries in view lasting relationship. Nikkie Rodriguez, Cogon, Cordova, Cebu, PHILIPINES.

MALE 6 ft 2 in, 32 yo, attractive, n/s, activities include aerobics, cycling & going to the beach, also enjoy picnics & camping. In view to building a relationship, would like to hear from slim lady aged 28-32 with similar interests. Please write to Philip, 9 Joyce Ave, WYONG 2259.

MALE 30, vegetarian, works 3 days selling fruit/veg to remote areas of outback Nth Qld. 4 days off to recover, sell leadlighting, herbgardenise, visit waterfalls etc. Seeks attractive, fit, intelligent female to share unique lifestyle. Must be racist, must cope with heat, trucks, eating choice fruits, my humour, getting bogged & crocodiles. Many rewards apart from financial & plenty free time. Claus, Box 283, RAVENSHIOE 4872. Ph: 070-976-782.

41 YO avid recycler/greenie seeks wo--
share ~~alternatives~~
CANCELLED

ATTRACTIVE 34 y.o. woman with 4 y.o. son living in Dubbo seeks to meet sensitive, intelligent male 32-44. Have wide range of interests including almost anything outdoors, conservation, music, art, gardening. Carmen C/- 51 Yulone St DUBBO 2830

ASIAN MALE 26 y.o. slim, likes tennis, table tennis, soccer & singing, seeking honest lady 20-37 for relationship with view to marriage. Please write to Kim, PO Box 253, BATEMANS BAY 2536.

GENT 48 6'2" fit & healthy, down to earth person, looking for genuine GR lady to help find our shangri-la to build a beautiful, healthy, peaceful, self-suff lifestyle. Write Robert, CA-PO Box 242, EUROA 3666.

GRASS 75 ROOTS

GRASSIFIEDS

CONTACTS

45 YO GENTLEMAN, loving, loyal, intense, honest, spiritual, communicator, emotional, alt health/fitness, slim, 178 cm, non-smoker/drinker, no drugs, meat eater, intellectual -expects same. Enjoys music, massage. American born clerk, 3B/R house on 5 ac. Wants compatible quiet lady, experienced in or committed to rural self-sufficiency, willing worker, unattached, very communicative, deep thinker who seeks a lasting romantic relationship. Prefer natural blonde, blue-eyed, feminine, no dependent kids, no debts, political activist, willing to relocate. Interstate replies welcome. Randolph, RSD 9, MYALLA 7325. Ph: 004-451-278 weekend evenings, 004-522-388 week nights.

MALE 17, BLUE EYES, neat blonde hair, fair skin, always out in shade & sunshine, have lge house standing clearly, big & beautiful. Lead a healthy lifestyle, 2 horses, 15 kennels, cattery, 4 dogs, cat, green shrubs & trees. A dry place with summer rains. Hardy eucalypt trees. I wish to meet an honest personality who enjoys outdoors, sunshine, gets plenty sleep, works well at own accord with own ideas of what they can and don't do, women's choice, about 17. Living with parents, excellent family. Enjoy growing beans, potatoes, corn, banana, pawpaw, pumpkin, tomatoes, custard apple, dates, coconut, pineapple, litchi etc. Like fowls, dogs. Like to see things go back to the garden soil eventually. I wish the best for conservation, like outdoor life and set up such as tent, camping etc. Enjoy bow hunting with game. Scott, 8 Duggan Dr, ALLIGATOR CREEK 4816.

I MISS SHARING my experiences and being shown new ideas. I'm seeking a woman to share my time, to spend our days with plans of tomorrow and memories of yesterday. Am 31, Piscean, 164 cm 60 kg, a non cig smoker

in good health. I find enjoyment in most things in life particularly walking in the rain, up a mountain, through the bush or along the beach, cycling, canoeing, gardening, open fires, reading in bed on cold nights or just people watching. If you enjoy any of these then it's a start, if you have common sense, a sense of humour & find honesty & happiness an important factor then write or scribble. If you're unable to put your thoughts on paper then jot down a contact number. I have a weakness for accents (particularly Irish) so nationality matters not one bit. I am open to age differences within reason, as with children. Brendan Browne, C/- PO, JINDABYNE 2627.

INTRODUCTIONS, soulmates, friends, understanding help. Full details SAE 'Consul-tus', PO Box 105, CLONCURRY 4824.

QUIETLY PASSIONATE craftsman seeks sunny, feminine soulmate (25-35), interested travel & secluded cottage lifestyle possibly Tas. David, PO Box 31, DARLINGTON 6070.

ATTRACTIVE GR COUPLE, she 35 and bi, he 28. We're building our home on 3 beautiful acres, 20 min sth of Hobart. We're seeking a bi lady to share our lifestyle & happiness. We can offer you rent free accomm with us in return for helping in building. You could then stay with us permanently or alternatively we will help build you a cottage on our land. We desire a lady who could become part of this family sharing work & leisure. We're a genuine couple willing to give someone a break. PO Box 221, SNUG 7054.

VEGETARIAN LADY 30 seeks honest nice looking male to 40s, view perm relationship, no drugs, occasional drink OK. Only sincere replies for GR type lifestyle in the hills, clean living, romance, waterfalls, music. Secking a good friend? Contact A. Smith, 40 Ellen Gve, LAUNCHING PLACE 3139. Ph: 059-673-390

GEMINI MAN 41, separated with 4 y.o. son seeks compatible lady 30-45 for loving monogamous relationship. Preferably non-smoker, vegetarian, not a feminist, activist or spiritual tripper, child OK. I love a quiet, peaceful country environment, nature, dark night skies, home comforts, firesides, family vibes. Currently building my own home, house on rural land. My deepest interests are astronomy, astrology, gardening, herbalism, homoeopathy, classical music, lute playing, making instruments & many more. Michael, 45 Urquhart St, CASTLEMAINE 3450.

LATE GRASSIFIEDS

NEEDED - Experienced bushy/ies to care for isolated river farm in redgum forest, in return for cabin/s, vegie garden, fruit trees etc. No dogs, cats, children. References, genuine enquiries only. Longterm home for right people. More information: Helen Campbell, PO Box 788, DENILINUIN 2710. Ph: 058-823-354.

BOOKS, Australiana, etc. Lists from R Suters, PO Box 127, FIGTREE 2525.

'NATURALLY DRIED FRUIT'. A book of ideas about natural sundrying of fruit using no chemicals. \$9 posted. Helen Poyntz, 'Fosnez', RMB 1182, WOORAGEE 3747.

FOR SALE Daylesford Vic 10 ac, one third cleared, one third native bush, one third 19 yo pine. Part fenced, dam with fish, large shed, 2 b/r house part furnished, and much more \$60,000. Ph: 059-774-154, AH 059-774-081, leave message for Les.

TO RENT - furnished room & share whole house, would suit country person, own transport, small farm. \$70 a week. Ph: Joan 02-605-4908. Ingleburn 2565.

FOR SALE full set of back issues of Grass Roots, Early Years to 41. Best offer. Write P. Menzies, 41 Rotherwood Rd, IVANHOE 3079

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Folks,

As individuals we believe that we are indebted to the information and companionship we have found in *Grass Roots* over the years. Moreover, we owe our meeting (despite living 700 km apart) and eventual marriage to this magazine. It is wonderful sharing the joys and sorrows of life together. We may be struggling financially, but life itself is rich. Each day is unique; each moment to be experienced. Our family now has two children, Heidi and Anneliese, and is growing all the time.

At present we live in suburbia, attempting semi self-sufficiency. We have declared war on the kikuya grass – 18 months ago both front and back lawns were unbroken expanses of the stuff, but slowly, literally inch by inch, we are converting the grass area into herb and vegetable gardens. We have also been doing our little bit towards reforestation by replanting our block. Much to the amazement of our neighbours, our concrete driveway now boasts healthy pumpkin plants, more herbs and a shade tree, thanks to an afternoon spent with a sledge hammer and chisel!

We keep busy with our music, our work, our family, home and garden, and respective part-time studies (though not necessarily in that order). I have recently founded the HARP SOCIETY OF VICTORIA and would love to hear from anyone playing harps. The philosophy of the society is to promote the study and enjoyment of the harp and its music. Although many of the functions are based in Melbourne, there are events planned for country Victoria, such as a Harp Camp next year.

Eugene is a keen cyclist and would like to hear from anyone who has information on/interest in RECUMBENT BICYCLES (vectors). He has plans on the drawing board for modifying the stability.

Julie and Eugene Willems
24 Deakin St
ESSENDON 3040.

Dear Readers,

About mid-1990 I intend opening a MACROBIOTIC CENTRE FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA, dealing mainly with teenagers, where six week live-in programmes will be offered. It is important to the success of this programme to provide the young participants, in total five per programme, with some form of constructive work. I have about 12 level irrigated acres with a 21.2 water right, disused dairy and 3-phase power which could be used for this purpose.

Propositions from anybody interested in taking over this land, or ideas on how it could be used, would be much appreciated. Macrobiotics is an alternative holistic approach which would preclude any ventures incorporating the use of chemicals. I believe I am situated too close to an orchard to have food produced on this land classified as organic. Peace and happiness to all.

Linda Smith
PO Box 95
MURCHISON 3160.

Dear Friends,

After 7 years of planning we have finally made it to our LITTLE PLOT OF PARADISE. We always longed to be out of the city and in the bush. We had a 1/4 acre block in the western suburbs of Sydney with a wood fire and a big vegie and herb garden. We tried to have a backyard farm but we still felt too confined and stressed by noises that weren't natural. One day I said 'Enough! Let's put this place on the market and go.' Go we did – all the way to Queensland! After reading an ad in the *Grassifieds* we came, we looked and put down our deposit.

When we opened the door to our log cabin it was like stepping into another world, it was a magical feeling that we still wake with every morning. The hardest work was done for us, a roof over our heads, although there is still a lot to be done. One of these was putting up a water tank so I could have enough pressure for the washing machine. It looked so funny in the final stages while Geoff was trying to patch some holes in it with our youngest daughter, the 4 week old kid doe we bought the day before and our two dogs supervising him. At the moment we are putting up an instantaneous gas hot water system as we boil all our water for washing and this can be a very time

consuming practice. Then we have to fix the loo as it is a septic 44 gallon drum and we tend to think that its life expectancy is over as it overflows every time it's flushed. Then we might get around to sealing the walls and floors as when the wind blows it gets rather chilly. Maybe we might even have the ruts in the road filled so we don't have to walk up and down the hill when it rains as the 4WD even has trouble – sliding downhill with the creek below can be rather scary!

While all this major work is going on I have been having some fun milking my two Saanen nannies that we picked up a couple of weeks ago for \$10 each and collecting the few eggs off my new family of chooks, 13 in all and 4 ducklings and 4 chicks that I got as day olds. We also have some beautiful birds here and each time I see a new face I go and check my bird book to find out which one it is. The bird life here is just magnificent. We have also seen a ringtail possum – noisy beggars but very cute – and a little squirrel glider in the trees at night. The snakes are a bit of a worry – so far we have had 5 red belly blacks, 1 yellow whip head and a night tiger crawl in the kitchen window! What a shock that was. We hope to encourage the kookaburras so they will do their job and eat the snakes.

Anyway after another productive day making 21 more bottles of ginger beer, doing the washing, feeding animals etc it is time to sit and read through a few more old copies of *Grass Roots*. Thank you to all the people who make this magazine. It is wonderful to share your ideas and read of your wonderful times on your plot of earth.

Sue, Geoff, Nicole and Aleasha
MS 591 Tagigan Rd
WOLVI 4570.

Dear David, Megg and GRs,

We have not written to you before but we have been reading *Grass Roots* for a very long time now. As we were travelling up Iriss Quigley's way, and read all her good articles when they were put in, we thought we would like to meet her, and are very glad we did. She is a wonderful inspiration to everyone I think. She gave us great advice about land in that area and about legal things, alternative ways of treating diseases and lots of other things, while we took up a lot of her time that morning. I hope she continues writing about all the knowledge she has.

PRICES FOR LAND now everywhere are so very high; we thought we could get something for about \$10,000 but it wouldn't buy a town block anywhere. We have a tent with cooker and bed so can stay in a district to get a good idea of land and prices, as just getting a few prices and passing through a place will not give a true picture. We intend now to go a bit further but to go inland too as there seems to be cheaper land away from the coast and we are not surfies. If we get casual work we take it: we have been picking peas and beans, also shovelling a load of river stones to fill up a very muddy driveway. I find it all very interesting. I have the loan of a typewriter to do this for a couple of hours. So with cheerful help from many people as we go along we will continue looking now very scientifically for land and places to live. Good luck to other lookers too.

Miriam Southern,
POTTSVILLE 2489.

Dear GR Readers,

Greetings to you all – can anyone give me some information on hardboiled home grown EGGS? When I hardboil my eggs, the shell always sticks to the eggs and doesn't come away cleanly as in bought eggs. Is there a way you can stop this happening? I know it is only cosmetic but they look so much nicer for salads etc when they shell in one piece without losing part of the egg in the shelling. Also has anyone got recipes for duck eggs, I realise that you can use them in cakes etc and for general cooking but have hesitated to use them in such things as lemon butter in case they are too strong – I don't like the strong flavour myself when eating them as boiled or scrambled eggs. Best wishes to all.

Debbie Willett
C/- PO
FERNVALE 4306.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear David and Megg,

Do you know of any non-polluting, NON-ECODAMAGING PAINT? I'm sure I read about some in a magazine but can't relocate it. The building is 90 years old and hasn't been painted for 30 years. It's very important to do something soon to preserve the cracking splitting curling exterior.

Thank you for a great mag – but too short, I read it in half a day and again and again!!

Monica O'Neill
MS 162
WARWICK 4370.

One company that advertises natural paints and varnishes is Bio Products Australia, 25 Algate Tce, Bridgewater 5155. Ph: 08-339-1923.

Dear Grass Roots,

It has been my pleasure lately to read some wonderful BOOKS which every GR reader thinking of BUILDING their own house would find enchanting. Here they are: *Architecture Without Architects*, by Bernard Rudofsky, publishers, Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53rd St, New York, NY 10019; *Improvisations: Traditional Low Cost Building Techniques*, by John Archer, publishers, Second Back Row Press, PO Box 43, Leura 2781, ISBN 0 908136 16 1; *The Houses of Mankind*, by Colin Duly, publishers, Thames & Hudson, 500 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10036, ISBN 0 500 06005 3; and of course any book by Henry Thoreau, circa 1850's, just to set your mind right about why you are out in nature in the first place. These books give a deeper insight into building than most and touch on a spiritual feeling of space and scale neglected in the twentieth century styles. Happy reading.

Roberino
Lot 4 Arrawarra Beach Rd
ARRAWARRA 2456.

Dear GR Folks,

Thank you for a wonderful magazine. I really look forward to each edition and refer to them constantly. I have just been offered an old house to rent out of town, with use of some ground – just what I need for my 3 boys aged 17, 11 and 6. My 17 year old and my ex-husband are working on a 32 FT BUS, I eventually want to travel in. It is an Albion diesel and I would appreciate any tips on preparation, design, or travel tips. If I move out of town we will be making good use of the design for the composting outhouse I noticed in a long past issue.

Is there anyone who would appreciate some old style mosquito nets suitable for cheese? Let me know and I'll send them on.

I try hard to instil in my boys their part in the care of our environment and the need for loving care. In 20 years of taking in 'lame dogs' I've only been 'bitten' once when the man I took in in good faith, supposedly in a time of great personal grief (his), robbed me of everything I owned, never to be restored. However even from this, I have learned that although I missed my goods and chattels I can live without them – basically the difference between wants and needs.

Thanks to the lady who suggested CIDER VINEGAR rinse for dandruff. Mild vinegar and water douche is also good for thrush and monilia infections, rather than messy creams.

God bless and keep you in a safer world. Keep on caring. Yours in peace.

Sue Gortinge
26 Roderick St
TAMWORTH 2340.

Dear Folks,

I am Linley 42 and husband Graham is 47, son Vik 16 is away at school but home soon. We are hoping to sell and pay off mortgage and purchase a place with a few acres without a mortgage. We plan to move to Kingaroy-Nanango-Murgon area farming country away from the cane. We'd love to hear from anyone in those areas, regarding work, craft outlets, flea markets etc. I answer all letters. I'm a keen gardener and this area is generally too dry. I hope to be down that area soon and we'll look around! If anyone would like to meet and make friends etc. please write. We live approximately 50 kms from Bundaberg.

If anyone wants any TARO PLANTS please feel free to let me know soon. I have such a lot of small ones and I hate to throw out any

when they have pups. These are lovely pinky mauve ones, we have had a few. We love them cooked with onions and coconut cream.

Don't anyone buy a 10,000 gallon FIBRE GLASS TANK without checking thoroughly. We got one, over \$2000 with a 15 year guarantee. It was in 18 months when it exploded (50 tonnes water pressure!) and did untold damage. Our lawyer is trying to get compensation for us. It was less than 1/8 inch thick, we couldn't believe it. What frightens me is someone may have small children and if they were near an exploding tank would surely be killed. The insurance only will pay for pump and plumbing etc and we estimate \$7000 damage. We will get \$250 from insurance and will have to see what we can recover from the manufacturer. Life goes on but we could have done without this with the house on the market. We've cleaned up the mess now and have decided not to get another tank.

Does anyone know where I can get CROCHET CARDIGAN PATTERNS for adults, that are easy to understand and go into the larger sizes? I'd gladly pay for photocopies or books and postage. I'm also a dressmaker, a cook and I dress dolls and do various other crafts etc. Can anyone tell me where I can get a book about rearing and breeding peacocks? Love and peace and harmony to all.

Linley Rowse
CMB Cordalba
CHILDERES 4660.

Dear Grass Roots People,

Hello to you all and thank you for this wonderful magazine. It is soothing to know how many real humans there are who are also learning to turn their backs on pretentious living. In my own process, I am gently regaining some self esteem after living in a captive situation. *Grass Roots* has been of great assistance, helping me to get back down to basics, realising that there are so many humans around who are not vampires.

I am living in a small antique house on 1/3 of an acre of land in Cockatoo, Victoria. I, with my beloved sister-in-cat Felicity, and my favourite male human Skye, am starting out in contacting and healing this piece of Earth. I've just built my very first compost bin and tilled my very first vegetable-patch-to-be. As my compost bin still hasn't fallen down, I'm very proud of myself – I've had very little training in carpentry, being female in a patriarchal family, so I think I've done well, even if it is a bit crooked!

I have recently made the decision to give up cars. I've never been fully impressed by them and in my younger youth intended horse riding and walking to the places I wished to go. Well now I have my licence, and I have a car, and it rubs my fur the wrong way (as Felicity would say) to actually drive the smelly thing. I re-intend finding an equine friend who would like to help me to go places. I am aware that horses, to generalise, are very generous people, so I don't foresee any difficulty in actually finding someone. However, I've never had a horse before. What do I do? I have confidence in my sensitivity and balance, so I know I won't hurt anyone while developing my riding skills. But, is there a simple method to KEEPING A HORSE? A daily menu, weekly menu re extras, worming menu, seasonal what to do whens? I would very much appreciate some advice on this subject – I could not bear to think of myself as having hurt or maltreated someone in any way.

Also, if there are any other humans who have given up unnatural forms of transport, I'd love to hear about your ways of thinking and your experiences. We are currently in the minority, there are few if any role models and I would appreciate some company in this transition.

To my old friend, Rosemary J Wallace, the one who went to Maranatha, and with Misty and Koke, taught me so much about riding ... where are you? I lost your address somewhere in all this movement, and I'm thinking of you a lot – how are you? I'm sorry I haven't written for so long, now you know why! To all you lovely people, may the Goddess and the God bless you in all your exciting endeavours! With peace, sincerity and love.

Yazmin Catlyn
PO Box 446
COCKATOO 3781.

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

To Grass Roots Readers,

G'day! I have a problem (or two). One is my low income – I'm on Austudy – which prevents me buying a hardback book called *Permaculture – A Designer's Manual* which normally costs \$70. Does anyone know where I might find a second hand copy? Another problem is that in five years time, I intend to TRAVEL AROUND AUSTRALIA with several dogs, a bird or two in a motorvan and work in nurseries, on farms and orchards and whatever else I have skills in. For now, as a starter, what I want is penfriends who would like to see me one day during my travels (and who I would like to meet too!), thus when I travel, I'll know someone along the way I can see and talk with. Anyone interested?

Judith Robb

Alstonville Caravan Park
Bruxner Hwy
ALSTONVILLE 2477.

Dear Grass Roots People,

We have been readers of *Grass Roots* for a long time and often get out old copies and reread them they are so interesting. Most magazines once you've read them are thrown out but not so with *Grass Roots*. It was pleasing to note how many Queensland letters were in GR 73. Queensland seems to be way behind our southern cousins when it comes to the alternative scene. I know there have always been the odd organic gardener and people interested in permaculture but it seems to me that the whole thing is very new in Queensland. However, things are changing and quickly too. I was reading some very old *Grass Roots* given to us very generously by a friend – and noticed that there were lots of organic groups going over 10 years ago in Tasmania and the southern states whereas here in Qld you could count them on one hand until very recently. The Brisbane Organic Growers Group has done a good job but Brisbane is a long way from some of us. Here in the Biloela area we have got a thriving little group going since last November. We called our group CALLIDE ORGANIC GROWERS because the area is known as the Callide Valley since the Callide Creek with its tributaries winds its way through the fertile valley. There is a very intensive area of farming and irrigation around here and as you can imagine lots of chemicals and artificial fertilisers are used. The soil is mostly alluvial creek flats and many different crops are grown, grain, beans and cotton etc. Another reason that we named the group Callide Organic Growers and not after Biloela (which is the main town in the area) is that the group had its beginnings at the site of what was the Callide township where some of the original settlement in the area was made. We feel that that is in some way significant – that maybe we can encourage farmers (and gardeners) to consider some of the 'good old fashioned' ideas, to change from using and abusing the soil and to consider how things were done in the past. Not that anyone has a wish to return entirely to doing everything the 'old' way, manually, but to realise that we have been brain-washed into thinking the modern 'chemicals and more chemicals' is the only way to do things.

Our group has grown from a handful of original members to about 20 financial members and we hold meetings once a month. We discuss everything from worms and mulch to breadmaking and grinding flour and a lot in between! Anyone who is interested is most welcome to contact us and attend our meetings. We feel there was a need in the area for a gathering of folk of like mind to discuss their successes and tragedies and so far it has worked out well.

Hoping for many more issues of *Grass Roots* – keep up the good work. Thanks to all.

Les, Ann Hills and girls
PO Box 498
BILDELA 4715.

Dear GR Readers,

My husband and I along with our 2 children Lee (6) and Shannon (1 month) are still renting in good old down town suburbia and yes, that means Somerville too. For the past few months my husband Ray has got hold of your mag and the more we read the more we are convinced to get going and let nature take its course, so to speak. We would love to hear from anyone who lives around MALLACOOTA, EDEN,

CANN RIVER, JINDABYNE area to let us know what's available in the way of farms or farmlets for sale.

Ray is getting rather angry and frustrated with the apathy and constant humdrum of our existence at the moment. Becoming self-sufficient, growing our own vegies (organically grown of course), slowly but surely letting our hair down and at last being able to relax and do our own thing and being able to share experiences without a 'what's in it for me ploy' – that's what we need. For Lee and Shannon too I know that the rural scene will benefit them more in the long run, not forgetting good old Mum and Dad.

I was born on a farm in what now is tile city. I must say it's very depressing to see all those orchards and market gardens gone, replaced by masses and masses of 2 storey and single storey monstrosities. Ray lived in Cann River for most of his childhood so you could say we are going back in time for a while. Hope to hear from some of you soon. Take care.

Caroline, Ray, Lee & Shannon
7 Penton Court
SOMERVILLE 3912.

Dear Grass Roots Family,

A few thoughts on comments and queries in Feedback GR 72, April '89. Like Antoinette Shanahan, I have doubts over immunising my children, but my oldest boy (5) seems to constantly catch colds when we go to town (we live in the bush) and his tonsils always seem to be swollen. I consider we have a healthy diet and lifestyle, so wonder why his immune system seems to have a battle with such minor seeming infections as the flu – the latest Sydney variety which he is only just shaking off after about 6 weeks of it (and that only after we left Sydney and returned to our warm clean climate). Anyway, so now I am about to investigate HOMOEOPATHIC IMMUNISATION, which would certainly work closer with the laws of nature in imparting immunities than the allopathic; that avenue may be worth investigating for treating animals such as cows, dogs etc, for the effects of ticks, fleas, heartworm, worms and so on.

To Nada Harris, who is seeking a YOGHURT PLANT, I have a plant, I believe it is kefir (Bulgarian), which I've had for 6 or 7 years. When I wish to give yoghurt making a rest, I put the plant in some milk and freeze it. I have found it keeps for at least a year that way, though it takes a couple of days at room temperature to start working again. I really don't know how I could send you some, as I live on Cape York in Qld, but if you have a suggestion, you're welcome to some of mine. Pity, as I was in Melbourne recently.

To Sandra Nixon of the SMELLY FEET – you could try washing your shoes, also a general body detoxification may help (see your friendly naturopath) and possibly taking chlorophyll may also help. Wear sandals where you can and let your feet breathe and throw away your nylon socks or stockings.

Hope I've been of some help. Regards.

Sandi Feller
PMB 51 CMC
CAIRNS 4870.

Dear Grass Roots,

I come from Albury NSW and have worked on a few MUDBRICK HOUSES around Bright and Mt Beauty area. Now I am living in Queensland I would like to build my own place. The type of house I want to build is two storey, can I do this in mudbrick? I heard that there is a machine that makes the bricks load bearing – is this true, can anyone send me some info on it? Is there anyone in Queensland that I could talk to about mudbrick houses, all the council regulations and anything I have to do to be able to build my mudbrick house. Any info on mudbrick houses would be appreciated. I've read the *Earth Builders Companion* by John and Gerry Archer, are there any other books available? Hope to hear from you soon.

Stephen James
42 Lucas St
SCARBOROUGH 4020.

The 'Earth Builders Companion' is still available, \$7.50 posted from Night Owl Publishers, PO Box 764, Shepparton 3630. What else can readers suggest?

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Megg and Kath,

The Penan people of East Malaysia ask us for our help, not to buy RAINFOREST TIMBERS (eg meranti, kulia) because their beautiful home in which they have lived for generations is being destroyed by logging. Please write to Senator Gareth Evans, Foreign Minister, and request that he support a ban on the importation of such timber (address: C/- Parliament House, Canberra 2600). Rainforest Action Groups around the country organise many activities to raise awareness on these issues. You are invited to join us. Please contact The Rainforest Information Centre, PO Box 368, Lismore 2480 for details and information. For the Earth.

**John Kanowski
20 Stokes St
BARDON 4065.**

Dear Megg, David & GR Readers,

This is my first letter to say how much I have enjoyed reading *Grass Roots* over the years, especially readers' letters and your thoughts in 'Gumnut Gossip' Megg. In GR 73 I had to smile over your exasperation with computer technology – from experience I found one either develops an extra dimension of patience or goes insane! I agree with your thoughts Megg (GR 70) where 'people need to tune into and acknowledge their spiritual and ethical beliefs, and to act upon them'. I enjoy reading letters where people have discovered happiness to be more than just 'bricks and mortar'.

I am a nurse and my husband is a businessman, who have found our 'material utopia' on 20 acres in the middle of a large farming district, 12 kms from Geraldton, WA. Over the past three years we (with family, friends and a builder's help) have spent all our spare time and energy converting a 1 bedroom, broken down, unlivable old cottage into a larger livable happy home (only love making it a home). We have taken things steadily and quietly, one job at a time, mending and erecting fences, pulling out prickly bushes, cleaning out 60 ft well, erecting a windmill, sealing the old concrete tank and also adding another (we aren't connected to scheme water), removing truckloads of rubbish, until at last we could plant plenty of native trees and bushes with the onset of winter. The soil is very rich but too hard to dig in summer.

It is so peaceful and quiet here as we live at the end of a country lane with only one other house in sight, and they are the nicest country neighbours one could wish for. Our pets include 4 Angoras, 4 lambs and 1 horse. Our two teenage boys also enjoy our hideaway after a busy school day (a school bus runs nearby) and on the holidays. Now that I have made the break with suburban living I would never wish to go back. Next on the agenda is a chicken house and then some chickens – GR 72 will then come in handy! If anyone feels like writing, please do. Kind regards and God bless.

**Sandy
PO Box 2055
GERALDTON 6530.**

Dear Readers,

Can anyone provide information on the following: MAKING SOAP (preferably without caustic soda), shampoo, conditioner, general household cleaners? They are so expensive these days! Can anyone help me CURE THURSH? I've tried yoghurt, tea-tree oil, no luck. And last of all can anyone help me with INFERTILITY? Had all the doctor's tests, nothing showed up. I'd really appreciate any information you would like to share. Thank you!

**Maryanne Ryan
RMB 806 Taralga Rd
Via GOULBURN 2580.**

Dear GR,

My family and I (Therese, Eb, Jessica 5 yrs, Alison 3 yrs) are considering MOVING TO TASMANIA. We have interests in organic gardening, owner building, home education etc and are working towards a self-sufficient lifestyle. We've been looking at land prices in all areas, and job opportunities. My spouse Eb is presently employed as a Technical Studies teacher although he has many experiences in all sorts of employment as well as being a self-employed cabinet maker, renovator, builder. He is interested in eventually returning to

self-employment in these areas. I am self-employed making cakes for shops and going to markets selling hot foods (vegetarian), potted herbs, and spice shelves that Eb has made. We are interested in doing this sort of thing in Tasmania if it's viable. We are particularly interested in building in mudbrick, but do not have any information regarding this being an option in Tasmania. Are people using this building material there? So, if anyone in Tasmania could help us out please drop us a line or two.

**Therese Ryan
Boorool Rd
Via LEONGATHA 3953.**

Dear GR Readers,

I would be grateful if anybody could supply me with a simple but foolproof METHOD FOR TANNING goat, sheep and cow hides. I am aware that tanning kits are on the market but find these too expensive.

Thank you for a good magazine, I especially like some of the more unusual recipes. Cheers to all!

**G Wrobel
PO Box 140
SEGAN 5353.**

GR 75 contained a very useful article on tanning your own – or someone else's – hides.

Dear Megg

If Sandra Nixon of Stanmore (GR 72, p. 11) doesn't get any info about SMELLY FEET, I have read that Vemo powder – a deodorant powder, I think put out by Johnson & Johnson – is really good, also bicarb soda is worth a try. You must keep feet dry and change socks often. Also you need to make sure you use leather inner soles. All the best.

**Mona Parker
MANILLA 2346.**

Dear Readers,

I have been reading your magazine for approximately ten years now, it's one of the best and brings joy to my heart to know that people care enough about their environment and each other as you all prove through your letters. I am a mother of four lovely young children. There have been several issues in recent news that concern me and my family and naturally all the world. I have begun a group, an organisation, an idea or whatever you may conceive it to be.

We all know by now that each and every one of us has to save the world, and the scientists say within ten years, this is a very heavy issue, I feel we are all obliged to do so. I have started a business selling and planting trees to regenerate the forests, we as a group also sell gift cards, posters and paintings, the proceeds of which go towards the cause of OUR WORLD'S FUTURE and making sure our kids and their kids can still run in the open air, eat natural foods and honestly have a future to look forward to. Another issue which concerns us is the homeless children situation. Being a mother, my heart cries out to these children that have to live in garbage bins and on the streets of our cities, with no help or support from the adults. We need these children to help, they are strong, young, energetic and looking constantly for someone to help them, they can help us and in turn themselves. I am working on feeding, clothing and mainly giving some sort of shelter to them, I feel that they have a great deal to contribute to our future and their children's future.

I'm asking you, the readers of this magazine to look deep within your hearts and honestly, practically think, what can you do to help. Any assistance or advice is very much appreciated and is assured to be used for our greatest asset, our world and humanity. We have a rainforest acreage here in the far north, the climate is wonderfully warm, tropical lush forests surround us, things grow quickly and easily here and I feel that this area is a great place to grow for the future. I'm looking forward to your response and advice, may God bless you all.

**Sharon Kelnins
Holding Hands For Humanity
C/- 176 Mulgrave Rd
CAIRNS 4870.**

Feedback Link-Up Feedback

Dear Megg and Readers,

Thank you all who wrote to us in RESPONSE TO OUR ARTICLE which appeared in GR 70. We received a bundle of mail all now answered individually. It was encouraging to receive such support and we were again stimulated by your own individual efforts. Collectively you all seemed to be in tune with our position, however there were the odd writers who read into our article something along the lines of *The Power of Positive Thinking*. There were others who assumed we were in need of spiritual guidance and sent books and pamphlets. There may be others who have misread the theme behind our article: it is to these that we write this letter.

We are just as much at sea in this world as the rest. We do not have a formula for passage through life. The fact that we appear to be in control is more a direct result of what *Grass Roots* writers have written over the previous years than it has to do with our own efforts. We were able to continue because others had beaten the odds. If we have 'achieved' anything it has nothing to do with thinking positively. We simply followed where others had trod. Our article was as much a tribute to these people as it was an encouragement to others. If that article has a similar effect then it will have achieved its purpose. But we hesitate if we were wrongfully classed as some sort of 'achievers'. We fought to maintain our individual spirit and minds in a world threatening to swamp us all in a bureaucratic nightmare. We are not the answer, nor particularly what we did. If there are any lessons, it is the spirit that rejects the easy answers, that shuns the soft option, you should listen for in our article. But is not that the same spirit that repeats itself throughout the pages of each *Grass Roots*?

To those who see alternative lifestyles as potential prey to further your particular 'cause' by sending quasi-christian propaganda, we take exception. We received two lots of such mail both of which had no contact address. The only address was on the inside of a book, PO Box 124, Woy Woy NSW. I wrote to this address in Feb, but have had no reply. Having passed through various fundamentalist teachings, we would like to warn others of this type of campaign. It is usually generated in the misguided name of love, but it is more usually the product of screwed up capitalistic thinking of some present time Christians who are more concerned with the state of the bank balance (bums on seats mentality) than they are with the concerns of the underprivileged or the environment. Genuine love places no requirements, has no rules or regulations. We treat unsolicited mail, particularly where there is no return address, with caution. We have found that the surest way to find love is to give it. In peace and love.

John & Leah Ford
60 Mimosa St
CLERMONT 4721.

Dear GR Readers,

During the winter of 1990 I am planning to spend some time in FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND, in the area north of Port Douglas and up to Cooktown, and possibly beyond. I will be camping and will not be taking a motor vehicle. I would like to hear from anyone who has travelled in that area, about the best place to camp, the availability of 'fresh food' and any other tips or ideas they might like to share with me. I would especially like to hear from any females who have travelled and camped solo in FNQ. The reason for my trip, apart from the wish to experience again the beauty of the far north, is to spend some quiet months and collect my thoughts before venturing overseas. Again, if any solo females would like to share their experiences of O/S travel, I would love to hear from them.

I have two rather more specific queries: - firstly, does anyone know of an effective means of STORING BOOKS and stationery in limited space in a humid environment for a couple of years? My books can't seem to escape moulds and mildews. Secondly, does anyone know of a good natural oven-cleaner? (I mean for really dirty ovens!) Thanks to all those people who continue to contribute to this inspiring magazine.

Judith Walton
C/- PO Box 77
WEST KEMPSEY 2440.

Dear David, Megg and Readers,

We moved to the country from Sydney to start a better life for our family as we had six kids. We then bought our dream about 6 months ago, an old home on five acres. Since being here we have an extra child making it up to seven kids. We also have 3 dogs, 3 cats, a goat who thinks she is human, 5 bantam chooks, a horse and a bantam rooster. Life is good for us. We now have the chance to raise our kids in good clean air. We are going to grow our own vegies, have chooks and ducks and geese. If you have a dream never give up, keep working at it.

The main reason I am writing is to ask for some assistance. I want to know where I can get some COFFEE BEANS and BANANA PLANTS as we would like to experiment with them to see if we can grow them. Also how to prepare the beans. The magazine has helped us a lot as it has given us a lot of good ideas. We are hoping to become as self-sufficient as possible as we live on a pension.

Ken, Liz Raven and family
Lot 5 Mangoplah Road
THE ROCK 2655.

Colin Westwood, the author of 'Growing Coffee' in GR 74, offered to send coffee beans to those interested. Send SAE to him, C/- PO, Uki 2484.

Hi Grass Roots,

Well, I didn't know there would be a magazine of your content. Just out of the blue a friend mentioned your magazine - actually an article on restoring shrunken woollens (GR 73). I glanced through your mag and saw heaps of good articles. Anyway I tracked one down in a paper shop and here I am.

For Miriam Moloney of Brooklyn (GR 73, p. 6), about that FLYING FOX: as kids we used to build a 'flying fox' from a length of 1 inch sisal rope and a pulley. Using large trees with hessian bags to minimise damage to the bark we made effective flying foxes. The pulley is threaded onto the 1 in rope. The bowline is tied around the top tree and rope is fed through the fork of the bottom tree, (don't forget the hessian bags). Use a truckies' hitch to tighten up the slack. A lot of strength will be needed - perhaps use a car to tighten. Tie a 1/2 in rope to the pulley to guide the load safely. Remember, never work under a suspended load. Also, the truckies' hitch could be used at the top end, if no car access.

Also anybody know where to get MEAD YEAST and yeast nutrient somewhere in Sydney? Take care.

B Taylor
6/13 Lucinda Rd
EASTWOOD 2122.

Dear Grass Roots,

I have only just discovered your magazine and you are up to issue 74. What a lot I have missed out on.

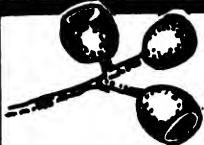
Your magazine is exactly the place I can get answers to the following questions. Does anyone have any suggestions for how to cure ECZEMA? My 4 year old son has it badly on his legs, around the edge of his face and on his ears. Our 10 year old has very dry skin. We have tried pawpaw ointment but it didn't work for us. When fruit is dried, how should it be stored? I put last year's into plastic bags and it grew things! Yuk! Is there a safe, easily homemade solution that could be used in an old handle pumped container against flies please? We used this sort of dispenser when I was a child.

Chris Plumridge
PO Box 350
DARETON 2717.

Hi There,

I sure would appreciate some help. I'm trying to FIND MY BROTHER, my only relative in Australia that I know of, besides my 3 year old son. We kept in touch regularly until August last year, but I last saw him in Cooma, southern NSW, in January 1987. He's called Paul Boss (plus various nicknames), lives in his truck, loves the open spaces, kids and animals, especially horses. He's over 6 ft tall, with a small frame, olive skin (tattooed), dark hair and grey green eyes. I'd love to hear from him or from anyone who thinks they know him.

Ray Sioux
C/- PO Box 764
SHEPPARTON 3630.



gumnut gossip

by Megg Miller



It's never dull here, the office staff say, you don't know what's going to happen next, and for that matter, neither do we. We've had lots of excitement over the years, dramas which at the time seemed earth shattering, our share of ups and downs, and we've had good times and hard times but without a doubt our latest escapade takes the cake. Our first day back after the holiday period and we were hard at work despite it being a stinking day. The temperature was so high waves of heat were reverberating off the ground and a wild wind whipped up dust and anything not securely fastened down. So rough was it that two concerned spouses rang through to warn of possible fallen branches obstructing the road on the trip home.

Being surrounded by paddocks of dried grass I too was concerned and went out mid afternoon to check sheds and the incubator as possible sites of fire because if one started there would be no stopping it. When I stopped off in the house for a quick drink I heard a great crash so quickly retraced my steps - to find a scene of devastation. The tree shading my brother house had split in the wind and fallen onto the office covering up half the roof. I didn't stop to look properly I moved so fast and an ashen faced Celia met me. 'It's all right Megg, Kath's not hurt, she's just a bit shaken but could you get a wet towel for her face?' Kath was all right but heavens she looked a sight, all grey and furry with insulation. She'd left her shoes behind in the rush, her nose and shoulder were skinned from falling timber but all she could think about was her lunch which lay buried beneath timber, twigs and insulation. She was indeed lucky and Celia, Chris and Gail who'd been seated nearby and watched it happen realised how lucky. When the electricity went off 20 minutes later we knew it was time to call it a day and the girls travelled home in a convoy in case of problems ahead.

Only an hour before the tree fell Kath had suggested Gail move her car in case of flying tin, legacy of a bad storm several years back that cleaned up a number of poultry sheds, depositing one on new staff member Julie's new car. Gail had moved the car and parked it under the tree, then remembered the old words of country wisdom 'never park a car under a tree on a windy day' and reparked it neatly next to the office. The fallen tree had missed it

by a cat's whisker, talk about another lucky person. David could also boast a lucky escape as his Maverick had been next to the tree all morning and he'd been gone an hour or so when it fell. Tall tales and true from the country! Maybe we should consider a neat little office and sedate workstyle in the nearby metropolis - at least we should meet our deadlines then!

Although it seems an eternity ago now I should mention the Trivia night we had back in early December. The theme if you recall was an evening of glitter and the stars who stole the night were undoubtedly Chris with her enormous - they were really tennis ball size - pair of glittery earrings and Mary's husband who had wired himself up with twinkling Christmas lights. The awards given were outlandish and appropriate, from apt caricatures, a poem on office personalities to a range of hilarious gifts. No effort had been spared by our new staff and the standard was such that it will be a hard act to follow.

Before moving on to some of the mundane aspects of this column I want to mention some delightful news. Celia, our office baby who suffers our geriatric stories with panache, struggled in from holidays with a twinkle in her eye and glitter on her finger. We've sympathised with her on the difficulty of typing with a new engagement ring and assured her that by the time she's our age she'll be used to it. We're thrilled for Celia and Matt and know you'll join with us in wishing them a happy engagement.

With space being at such a premium this issue I'll have to condense the other issues for discussion. The most important one is to draw your attention to the new parcel rates which are covered on page 43. They will make ordering a little more complicated but are, we hope, the fairest solution to a difficult problem. If Harry Knogler, who is bicycling around Australia, is out there could he please contact us, we have mail to be forwarded. And whilst on the topic of mail, you may have noticed that we have a new postal address. Our new address will be PO Box 242, Euroa 3666 but for convenience we will keep the old number going for a few months. We hope you'll forgive us if we are slow in getting back to you or in getting orders off and know you'll understand if the mag is a few days late.

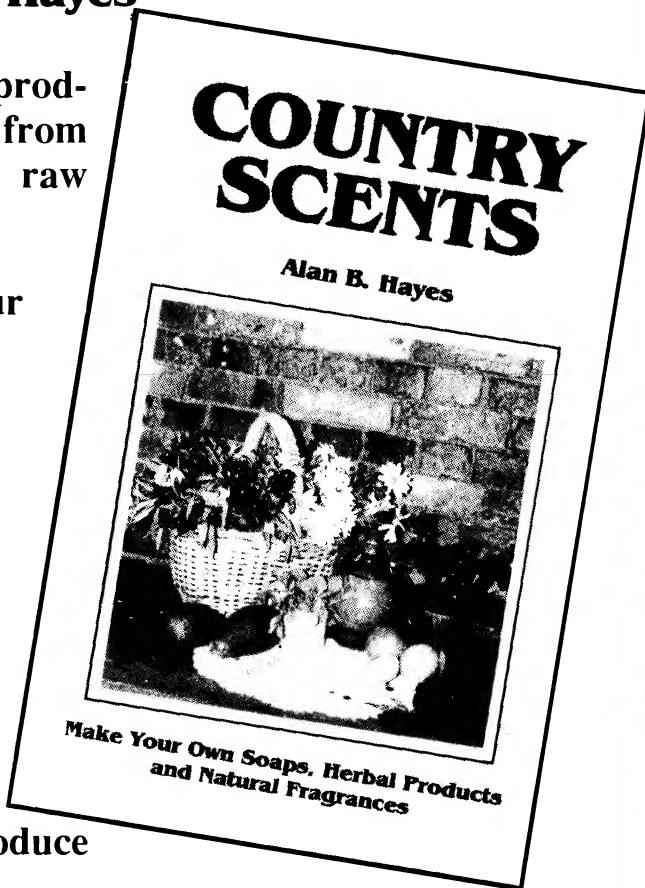


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